



Heytesbury Imber and Knook Parish Council Community Flood Plan

If there is immediate danger call 999

Plan last updated on: 15 January 2019.

Adopted by Parish Council 16.04.2019 – minute number PC/18/141

Plan distribution list

Name	Role	Phone number/email address	Issued on
Emergency Planning	Wiltshire Council Emergency Service	emergencyplanning@wiltshire.gov.uk	17.06.19
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	Wiltshire Police	101 non-emergency	
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Plan amendment list

Document	Changed by	Date
Initial 2011 document	Phil Dale	01/11/11
Updated	Phil Dale	05/12/14
Updated	Vanessa Sturmeay	05/03/18
Revised 2018 document. Updated template provided by Wiltshire Council	Louise Morris	15/01/19
Updated	Louise Morris	12/03/19

Disclaimer

Heytesbury, Imber and Knook Parish Council Flood Plan.

Heytesbury, Imber and Knook Parish Council accepts no liability for any loss or damage arising directly or indirectly from action taken or not taken in reliance on material or information contained within this Flood Plan, or for any failure to activate the plan or to carry out any planned activities in response to a flood alert or warning issued to or by the Outside Spaces Working Group, Flood Wardens and Community Volunteers.

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Introduction to the Flood Plan

The Heytesbury, Imber and Knook Parish is at risk from fluvial flooding from the River Wylde, which runs through our community. There are a number of vulnerable areas where the river could breach its banks; a number of bridges that may struggle to cope with a heavy rainfall, combined with an increase in the groundwater levels. There is a network of winterbournes and water meadows, which do manage the surface water run-off, and need to be maintained to ensure they can cope in extreme weather conditions.

The Environment Agency (EA) has indicated that a small number of homes at risk from fluvial flooding; 2 in Knook and 16 in Heytesbury. Flood Wardens are aware of those homes at risk, and in the event of a Flood Warning from the EA, these home owners will be contacted and will be given priority assistance and support in the event of an emergency. They have previously been advised to register with the EA for flood alert notifications. Advice, guidance and links to other emergency planning and support agencies will be advertised on the Parish Council Website.

Accordingly, the Heytesbury, Imber and Knook Parish Council have drawn up a flood plan which will be part of their community emergency plan, and have identified a number of Community Emergency Volunteers to assist in coordinating these activities. In the event of a flood, Flood Wardens will be contacted by the EA Flood Warnings Direct notification service. They will monitor the situation, call in support services as required, and offer assistance to vulnerable residents.

The Parish Council have some limited supplies of flood equipment which can be distributed by Flood Wardens in the event of an emergency, to those most vulnerable in the event of a flood. We have gel sac, which are inflatable Instant Sandbags; some empty sandbags that can be filled when required; a small amount of salt, in addition to that in the grit bins; a number of high visibility tabards and 4 signs to notify "Flood" and "Drive Slowly through Water."

This document is owned by Heytesbury, Imber and Knook Parish Council and has been prepared by Councillors forming the Outside Spaces Working Group.

Notes

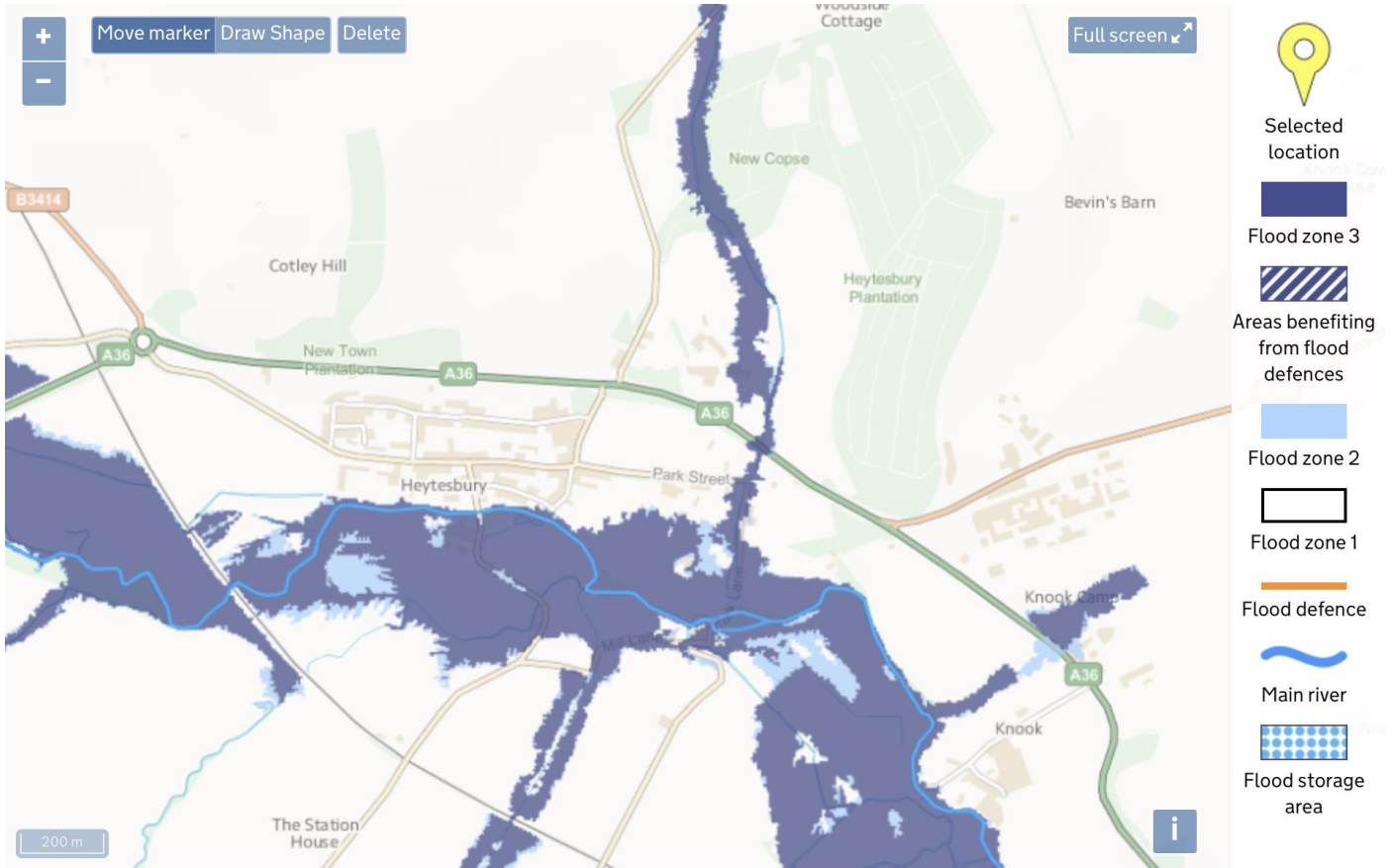
1. Because the present Flood Plan is intended principally to guide actions in the lead up to and during a flood, it is intentionally as concise as possible.
2. This Flood Plan does not provide information to householders as that information may be supplied by the Parish Council on their website and distribution of leaflets. Alternatively, advice and information for householders about what to do before and during and after a flood can be found on the following websites: -
 - www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk
 - www.property-care.org
 - www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/flooding-and-historic-buildings/
 - www.environment-agency.gov.uk
 - www.wiltshirecouncil.gov.uk

Essential and Medical Services Telephone Numbers

MEDICAL		
Ambulance	999	24 hour
Non-emergencies – NHS Direct	111	24 hour
A&E Salisbury District Hospital	01722 336262	24 hour
Local Doctors Surgery	The Orchard Partnership, Cherry Orchard Surgery, Codford	019895 850298 Out of hours - 111
	The Avenue Surgery, Warminster	01985 224600 Out of hours - 111
ESSENTIAL SERVICES		
Police Non-emergency	101	
Emergency Fire, Police, Ambulance	999	
BT Open Reach	0800 023 2023	
Network Rail	08457 11 4141	
Gas Emergency (National Gas Emergency Service - All providers)	0800 111 999 (24 hours)	
Electricity Emergency (SN16 – All providers) Network Operator is SSE Power Distribution	0800 072 72 82 (24 hours)	
Wessex Water www.wessexwater.co.uk	Emergencies 0345 600 4 600	
	Sewage Floodline 0845 850 5959	
	Burst Water Main 0800 692 0692	
Environment Agency Floodline (to access up to date information on flooding and general flood enquiries)	0345 988 1188 (option 4)	
Environment Agency Incident Line (to report flooding or river obstructions or other EA incidents)	0800 807 060	
Wiltshire Council Highways (to report surface water flooding)	0300 456 0105 localhighways@wiltshire.gov.uk Wiltshire App: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywiltshire-online-reporting	
Wiltshire Council Emergency Planning	01225 713159 emergencyplanning@wiltshire.gov.uk	

River and Environment Agency Data

Environment Agency Map showing flood zones: -




(For further information, and a more detailed and localised map, please see: - flood-warning-information.services.gov.uk)

Weather and Flood Warnings and Actions

Met Office Severe Weather Warning	
Triggers	Actions (What are you going to do?)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe weather is forecast from the Met Office. • Surface water flooding • Flooding of low-lying land and roads adjacent to the river • Other local observation of bridges, local roads, tracks, paths, winterbornes and water meadows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Co-ordinator/Warden sees or hears Met Office Severe Weather Warning and keeps watching brief on weather conditions. • Flood Wardens to communicate and keep situation under review. Consider "Whats App" Group to be set up for instant communication • Decide if Community Volunteers need to be engaged • Keep the situation under review and observation

Weather and flood risk forecasts


- Met Office weather forecast for (community)
<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/gcnkhg0b9>
- Met Office weather warnings (national, select "South-West")
<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/warnings/>
- Environment Agency three-day flood risk forecast
<http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/flood/3days/125305.aspx>
- Environment Agency flood warning national summary Southwest
<http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/flood/34678.aspx?type=Region&term=Southwest&from=fl>

Flood Alert		
	What it means	When it is issued by the EA
	Flooding of low-lying roads and land is possible.	Two days to two hours in advance of flooding
Trigger	Actions (What you going to do?)	
Alert received from Environment Agency from gauges on river at: EA site ID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Warden (FW) decides if Flood Alert trigger is activated, keeps watching brief on river conditions and may call Floodline for further information • Advise known vulnerable homes and vulnerable people 	


Environment Agency Flood Alert

To use Environment Agency Quick Dial:

- Dial EA Floodline 0345 988 1188
- Press 1 for warnings
- Hold the line
- When asked, enter the QuickDial number. 164130

Flood Warning		
	What it means	When it is issued by the EA
		Flooding of properties is expected
Triggers	Actions (What you going to do?)	
<p>Warning received from Environment Agency</p> <p>taken from gauge on river:</p> <p>Aim to give 2 hours warning notice</p> <p>Local observations of bridges, local roads tracks, paths, winterbornes and water meadows</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If more information required lead FW contacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environment Agency Incident Line 0800 807 060 ○ Wiltshire Council 0300 456 0105 • Lead FW makes decision based on discussion if Flood Plan is activated. • Alerts other FWs. • Lead FW contacts Parish Clerk and Chairman to advise FW have been activated. • FW may undertake the following actions: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ undertake a door to door check on households and businesses defined as "Being at risk" ○ Distribute emergency planning information and advice ○ Note and pass on requests for assistance ○ Distribute aid ○ monitor local water levels & provide feedback. ○ Assist with deployment of defences if required. ○ Liaise with neighbourhood police team regarding any traffic management issues if required. • Prepare sandbags and distribute according to sandbag policy. • Lead FW communicates with Clerk to begin updating Twitter/Facebook/website pages 	

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Severe Flood Warning		
	What it means	When it is issued by the EA
		Flooding of properties, danger to life, severe disruption to services and transport
Triggers	Actions (What you going to do?)	
<p>Will be issued dependent on issues on the ground.</p> <p>Local observations of bridges, local roads tracks, paths, winterbornes and water meadows</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead FW activates team and liaises with Parish Clerk and Chairman as above. • Lead FW liaise with Wiltshire Council Highway Duty Engineers & Environment Agency and other statutory agencies as appropriate • FW notify Lead of any potentially vulnerable people who will advise Wiltshire Council and/or emergency services. INFORMATION ON VULNERABLE RESIDENTS CAN BE SHARED WITH EMERGENCY RESPONDERS • FW record and photograph if safe the extent of flooding. • FW assist Emergency Services by providing local knowledge about conditions. • FW support parish council in opening and setting up rest centre and continued support to Wiltshire Council if required. • FW may assist Wiltshire council in manning road closure points if required AND SAFE TO DO SO. 	

Environment Agency Flood Warning

To use Environment Agency QuickDial:

- Dial EA Floodline 0345 988 1188
- Press 1 for warnings
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Warning No Longer in Force	
Triggers	Actions (What you going to do?)
<p>When river conditions begin to return to normal.</p> <p>Or local observation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rivers back in bank, levels falling and no significant rain forecast • Rivers back below trigger levels that activated initial warning • Alerts issued but no resultant flooding and forecast improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Flood Warden ensures other FW's are aware that warning is no longer in force. • Lead FW collates information gathered by FW's and Volunteers to submit to the Environment Agency, Wiltshire Council. • Advise at risk people that flood warning is no longer in force. THIS IS FOR RIVER FLOODING – SO REMAIN VIGILANT I.E. SURFACE WATER RISK MAY STILL REMAIN • Assist / support flood victims with information, including safe procedures for cleaning up, waste disposal etc. • FW and flood plan committee meet to review incident what went well, what not so well and any amendments to plan required. • FW support Environment Agency & Wiltshire Council to organise community meetings to gather information/advice regarding flooding incident, if appropriate

Local Flood Risk Assessment

Risks	Impact on community	What can be done to prepare?
In the event of a Flood Alert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be aware of vulnerable locations and properties contact, assist and advise vulnerable residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage residents to REGISTER to Environment Agency FLOODLINE WARNINGS DIRECT 0345 988 1188, including those that park their cars in risk areas. Hold periodic meetings of CEV's for the area. Report any local flooding to Wiltshire Council Highways 0300 456 0105 (24 hours)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out what flood defences exist or are planned in the area. Encourage residents/business at risk of flooding to install resistance and/or resilience measures. Educate children not to play in flood water. Identify vulnerable people in the area. Establish with Wiltshire Council or other parking services where cars at risk of flooding can be moved, then prepare vehicle owners to move vehicles. Prepare for ISSUING of flood warnings and any evacuation and rest centre establishment required.
In the event of a Flood Warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be aware of vulnerable locations and properties contact, assist and advise vulnerable residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above and additionally: Organise the clearance of river and banks of obstructions if appropriate (SAFETY ISSUE – SUITABLE TRAINING)
In the event of a Severe Flood Warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be aware of vulnerable locations and properties contact, assist and advise vulnerable residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above and additionally: Encourage owners of property with ditches/watercourses to maintain watercourses. Liaise with Wiltshire Council and Wessex Water on drainage.

Appendix - Flooding Indicators at vulnerable points within our community, as assessed by Environment Agency

Local Reference Point	Indicators
River level of River Wylde at Norton Bavant. Data from measuring station. This is what triggers our local FloodLine Alerts from the Environment Agency.	When the water level reaches 0.45m here, minor flooding is possible in this area. Review and Monitor impact.
Bridge at end of Park Street and top of Park Lane. Entry point of water from the Salisbury Plains into village winterborne	Keep an eye on the water levels entering the winter borne at this point.
Winterborne along length of Park Lane	Monitor the flow, particularly leading to and around the bridge to Park Farm.
Water Meadows, bridge and footpath adjacent to Mill Farm, leading to Mantles Lane	Monitor depth and flow of river. Monitor the groundwater levels in the adjacent water meadows, south of Old Forge Close, to Park Lane.
Riverside footpath, leading to Mantles Lane	Monitor groundwater levels and depth and flow of river adjacent to fields.
Mill Lane & Mill Street	Keep an eye on the river depth and flow, to the bridge opposite the Church.
Knook	Monitor the depth and flow of the river at the footbridges, and groundwater in adjacent water meadows

Notes

This is about keeping an eye on river levels at points where you know that once it reaches a certain point flooding will occur

Additional Information at flood-warning-information.services.gov

Flood Warden Guide

This Guide has been put together principally from information provided by the Environment Agency and Wiltshire Council.

Flood Warden Role Summary

	Community Volunteers DO	Community Volunteers DO NOT
BEFORE A FLOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand flood risk within their local area • Identify properties at risk of flooding • Identify vulnerable individuals • Support community plan training and activities • Help raise flood awareness • Assist with the recruitment of Flood Wardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT have property liable to flooding themselves • DO NOT attempt to enter or clear watercourses or culverts or floodwater in general
DURING A FLOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise their own safety at all times • Follow procedures set out in their Flood Plan • Relay information to the local community • Assist with the distribution of sand bags / gel sacs • Follow guidance from the emergency services at all times • Provide the emergency services with local knowledge and information • Collect information about the flood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT help residents move their belongings • DO NOT attempt to deal with argumentative or aggressive people themselves • DO NOT place themselves at risk at any time • DO NOT enter flood water at any time • DO NOT attempt to operate or repair flood defence structures or equipment that they have not been trained or authorised to use
AFTER A FLOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit information they have collected about the flood • Help to relay information to the local community • Support their community 	

Flood Warden and Community volunteer Role Profile

The information contained within this general role profile or job description is intended to clarify a Flood Wardens actions before, during and after a flood event. Importantly, this profile also outlines the limits of your role and responsibilities. Remember, your overall role is to support the community and not to carry out the job of the Emergency Services.

In undertaking any activities not described in this role profile you may not be covered by any insurance policy provided for you and your group.

Your role BEFORE a flood

Understand flood risk within your local area

The risk of flooding that your community faces changes over time. New buildings, roads and even farming and land use practices can affect flood risk. Watercourses, culverts and drains can be affected by debris that could restrict their flow. Keep aware of how changes within your local environment may impact on the risk of flooding.

You can play an important role by acting as the "eyes and ears" of the local authorities. Report any debris in watercourses or culverts to your group co-ordinator and/or the local flood risk authorities in accordance with procedures in your community plan.

Identify properties at risk of flooding

Some properties are at greater risk of flooding than others. Knowing which properties are more likely to flood and possible flow routes of flood water can help you to become better prepared for an emergency. To help, take a look at a flood risk map of your local area. Consider which properties have flooded in the past. Also, look for properties in low lying areas or close to watercourses.

Identify vulnerable individuals

Your strength as a community volunteer is your detailed knowledge of your local area and the people living within it. Build up an understanding of who lives in your area and especially anyone who may require priority attention during a flood such as the elderly or less mobile.

Once you have identified vulnerable individuals within your community keep this information safe and secure. Your group co-ordinator or Parish Council may manage a list but you are advised to remember the information without writing it down.

Support community plan training and activities

You are encouraged to take part in any training for Community Volunteers. This is to provide you with information to help you to carry out your role in a safe and responsible way. The training will be updated and repeated on a regular basis.

Your Flood Plan forms the basis of your community's response to flood risk. You should familiarise yourself with the contents of the plan and how to respond during a flood. You should always follow the guidance and advice set out in the plan as well as any training you have received to ensure you do not place yourself or others at unnecessary risk. If procedures within your Flood Plan contradict any activities described in this role profile highlight them to your Flood Co-ordinator who will be able to clarify the situation.

Your group of community volunteers might meet on a regular basis to discuss issues related to flooding in the local community. You are encouraged to attend these meetings, where possible, to keep up to date with developments and issues.

Help raise flood awareness

Helping to raise flood awareness within the community is an important activity within a community plan. Households and businesses may benefit from useful information such as; how to prepare for flooding, steps to protect property and emergency contacts. You may be asked to help with the door-to-door distribution of leaflets and newsletters, for example.

Assist with the recruitment of Community Volunteers

As a member of the community you may be ideally placed to identify other people with the enthusiasm, skills and attitude to support the community during a flood. If you know of anyone suitable to be a warden refer them to your Flood Co-ordinator.

DO NOT have property liable to flooding yourself

In the event of a flood you need to be fully available to fulfil your responsibilities as a Flood Warden. This is not compatible with having a property that itself is liable to flooding.

DO NOT attempt to enter or clear watercourses or culverts

Report any debris in watercourses or culverts to your Flood Co-ordinator and/or the local flood risk authorities in accordance with your Flood Plan. Do not place yourself at risk of injury or harm by attempting to enter or unblock watercourses or culverts yourself.

Your role DURING a flood

Prioritise your own safety at all times

Your priority at all times is to ensure your own safety and not to place yourself at unnecessary risk of injury or harm.

Follow procedures set out in your community plan

The procedures set out in your community plan are there to ensure a co-ordinated response from the community in the event of a flood. They are also there to promote your wellbeing and that of others.

Relay information to the local community

The Emergency Services, local authorities or the Environment Agency may call upon your assistance to relay information to the community. This may be to warn the public of a potential flood and particular areas to avoid or to provide information to promote health and wellbeing. This would involve door-to-door visits to engage with individual properties.

Assist with the distribution of sand bags / gel sacs

Many community plans provide support through the distribution of sand bags or gel sacs. When filling, distributing or installing these, always follow the advice and guidance set out in your training over correct procedures and manual handling.

Follow guidance from the emergency services at all times

The Emergency Services and the Police in particular take the lead during a flood event. Follow their advice at all times as you may be placing yourself and others at risk of harm if you do not. Remember, you are not a member of the uniformed emergency services. If you are told to evacuate from an area follow the guidance you are given.

Provide the emergency services with local knowledge and information

Your strength as a local Community volunteer is your detailed knowledge of your local area and the people living within it. Relay this information to the Emergency Services during a flood. Be mindful the information may relate to individual properties or persons and should be managed responsibly at all times.

Collect information about the flood

Information you collect and record during a flood can be important to the Environment Agency and other authorities when analysing the cause and how to reduce risk in the future. Notes and especially photographs on flow routes and water levels can be very useful.

DO NOT help residents move their belongings

While attending to your responsibilities as a Flood Warden people might expect you to help move property with them. Make it clear to people that this is not your responsibility and you have other duties to attend to. A warden is there to provide advice and co-ordinate the response effort, not to get physically involved.

DO NOT try to deal with argumentative or aggressive people yourself

When under stress, such as that from flooding, people can become irrational and aggressive. Always approach people in a civil, polite manner, clearly explaining what role you hold and how/if you can help. If they become aggressive in anyway, leave them alone and do not attempt to help unless approached and asked specifically.

DO NOT place yourself at risk at any time

Your safety is a priority. Follow the guidance set out in your training and do not undertake activities that may place yourself at unnecessary risk.

DO NOT enter flood water at any time

Flood water poses many different risks and dangers including; trips, slips, contamination, drowning and injury from submerged hazards. Do not enter flood waters.

DO NOT attempt to operate or repair flood defence structures or equipment that you have not been trained or authorised to use.

The unauthorised use of flood defence equipment could increase the risk of flooding or hide problems that should be addressed by the relevant authority. Similarly, do not use any equipment you have not been trained or authorised to use.

Your role AFTER a flood

Submit information you collected about the flood

Information you collect and record during a flood can be important to the Environment Agency and other authorities when analysing the cause of the flooding and how to reduce risk in the future. Submit your information to your Flood Co-ordinator.

Help to relay information to the local community

You may be able to support your community by relaying useful information after a flood. Newsletters and door-to-door visits can help keep people informed after an emergency. Information may relate to personal safety, hygiene, insurance claims or the risk of further flooding.

Support your community

It can take many months for individuals, households and businesses to recover from flooding and return to normal daily life. This recovery process can be stressful and impact upon people in different ways. As a member of the community you may be able to provide support to those affected. Refer members of your community to a suitable authority or expert for further guidance and advice.

Safety Information

This section of the community volunteer guide is intended to highlight the possible hazards and dangers that you could encounter while performing your duties. Below is a list of hazards, with an explanation of what they are and how they can be avoided.

Drowning

Common perception is that drowning occurs in deep water such as a main river, when in actual fact a person could easily drown in just an inch of water. It is also worth bearing in mind that 15cm (6in) of flowing water is all it takes to sweep an adult off their feet. This is particularly relevant when entering flooded fields near to a river where the water could still be flowing. The Environment Agency advises all Flood Wardens against the practice of entering floodwaters of any description. You should only carry out your duties if you can do so without the need to get wet.

Contamination

Disposal of contaminated equipment - After a flood there is a high probability that equipment used, such as sandbags, will be contaminated with sewage and pollutants. Disposal of these items needs careful consideration. If you think that the items used have been contaminated then you are advised to contact the local council for information and disposal. The EA booklet 'After a flood' also contains useful advice.

Leptospirosis - Two types of leptospirosis infection can affect people in the UK. Weil's disease is a serious and sometimes fatal infection that is transmitted to humans by contact with urine from infected rats. The Hardjo form of leptospirosis is transmitted from cattle to humans.

The main people at risk are Wardens who are exposed to rats, rat or cattle urine or to fetal fluids from cattle. Wardens in contact with canal and river water are at possible risk and farmers are now the main group at risk for both types of the disease. Other people who have contracted leptospirosis in recent years include vets, butchers, abattoir and sewer workers.

Getting rid of rats and not touching them with unprotected hands can prevent infection. It is important to cover all cuts and broken skin with waterproof plasters before and during your duties. Wash your hands after handling any animal or coming into contact with river water and always before eating, drinking or smoking. Leptospirosis is much less severe if treated promptly.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is caused by getting too cold. It is a condition in which your normal body temperature of 37°C (98.6°F) drops below 35°C (95°F). This is most common in cold environments, and the risk is increased if you are not wearing enough layers to keep warm, or do not have your head covered (the largest proportion of body heat is lost through the head). Hypothermia is also possible in mild weather. For example, if you get soaked in a rain shower and do not dry off properly soon afterwards, particularly if there is also a cool wind. The water evaporating from your skin brings down your body temperature.

If the weather is cold, make sure you're dressed appropriately before you go outside. Layers of clothing trap air, which helps to keep you warm. Tightly woven, waterproof clothes are best. Drink plenty of fluids and hot drinks (not alcohol) and eat regular, balanced meals to give you energy.

As a community volunteer you should return home immediately, and cease your duties, if you start to show signs of hypothermia. Please remember to listen to the advice of other residents and volunteers, as they may see you showing signs of hypothermia before you realise the onset of it.

Hostile situations

When under stress, such as that from flooding, people can become irrational and aggressive. Always approach people in a civil, polite manner, clearly explaining your role and how you can help. If they become aggressive in anyway, leave them alone and do not attempt to help unless approached and asked specifically. If they require emergency assistance contact the emergency services.

Manual handling

While attending to your responsibilities as a community volunteer people might expect you to help move property with them. Make it clear to people you must attend to your main responsibilities first. You need to remember that you are primarily there to provide advice and co-ordinate the response effort, not to get physically involved. As part of your plan it is a good idea to identify a group of willing volunteers who are trained and familiar with manual lifting techniques.

Other hazards

Slips, trips and falls - Try not to walk on uneven or slippery ground and always wear sturdy, appropriate footwear.

Livestock - Are unpredictable in behaviour and can be very dangerous, especially if under stress. Only approach livestock with a trained person (i.e. a farmer), and again, only if you feel it is safe to do so.

Traffic - During flooding people will want to remove people and property away from the affected area as quickly as possible, and will not always be concentrating on their driving and the road ahead. Poor driving conditions and decreased visibility in bad weather will often exacerbate this problem. Also watch out for vehicles being driven excessively fast through floodwaters. You should always wear a high visibility jacket and take extra care when crossing roads and thoroughfares. Watch out for manhole covers that have been 'blown' off, a stout stick can be used as an aid to balance and to probe shallow water.

Roads might become severely flooded and will need to be closed to through traffic. This usually falls under the responsibility of the police, district council or the Highways Agency. But often a community volunteer can place a 'Flood' sign close to the road more easily and quickly. Check with your coordinator regarding this.

Community Volunteers Legal Responsibilities and Advice

As a community emergency volunteer, you do not receive payment. The contract, if any, is solely between the Parish Council and the community volunteer. There is no employment contract between a community volunteer and the Environment Agency or Wiltshire council. The community volunteer is advised how to carry out their duties by the town council.

If damage is caused by a Community warden, who is liable?

As you will be acting as agents of Heytesbury, Imber and Knook Parish Council, it is implied that the Parish Council indemnifies you against liability arising from your actions unless you act negligently. All Community Wardens should check the Parish Council insurance policy to ensure they are covered against liability for their actions.

It should be stressed that in an emergency situation it is likely that a Community Warden will be under considerable pressure. By taking reasonable care, and following the agreed actions laid out in the Flood Plan and associated documents, the Warden should be protected against civil claims. The best endeavours principle would normally apply. Only where negligence is shown to be malicious could a Warden be found to be at fault. The standard parish council insurance coverage is usually valid against this sort of claim. It is probably worth checking - if only for your own peace of mind.

What if a Flood Warden is injured?

As mentioned, it is important to check whether you are indemnified against personal injury within the Parish Council insurance policy. The Environment Agency or Wiltshire Council will not be liable for community warden injuries unless the injury arose due to our negligence. The parish council will never ask a community warden to carry out any duties that would place them in danger.

What if a Community Warden fails to give a warning?

It is important to remember that the Environment Agency has a power, rather than a duty, to give flood warnings THE AGENCY HAS A DUTY TO ISSUE FLOOD WARNINGS FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF FLOODING – TIDAL AND FLUVIAL and the same principle also applies to a Community Warden. In English law, a failure to act does not normally attract liability. Therefore, as the law stands, it is unlikely that you would be liable for any damage that arose from the Warden failing to warn a member of the public of an impending flood. This would not be the case though if it could be proved that the Community Warden purposefully withheld information from the public in the event of a flood, and as a direct result, an individual incurred additional damage caused by the flood.

It should be noted that the legal distinction between failing to act and acting has never been part of European law. The coming into force of the Human Rights Act 1998 does make it more likely that the courts will seek to blur this distinction in English law. As of yet, no court cases have been brought against Community Wardens in order to test this theory.

Please be assured that it is highly unlikely that any court will prosecute a Community Warden as a consequence of their actions as long as the Warden acted in good faith and with good intentions.

Roles and Responsibilities of Authorities

The level of service offered by local authorities varies from district to district. Local authorities do not have a statutory duty to provide sandbags or give other assistance at times of flooding. But they will usually endeavour to help, particularly in cases of emergency. Most local authorities take the threat seriously and will put aside adequate resources to help combat the risk of flooding. However, resources are limited and the view of most authorities on residential flooding is that householders should take measures to protect their own properties from flooding.

In some locations, where there is a known flood risk, the parish council holds a limited supply of sand and empty sandbags for distribution at times of emergency. They are used to divert water flows and protect property. Often the flood warden will coordinate this when a flood warning has been received.

Roadside ditches

The maintenance of these is normally the responsibility of the adjoining landowner (riparian owner) and not the highway authority. If road flooding occurs as a result of blockages in these ditches the highway authority may use its legal powers to require the riparian owner to clear the ditch.

Land drainage

Local councils are the local land drainage authority for non-main rivers, but the maintenance of most watercourses is the responsibility of private owners (riparian owners) or of the local water supplier. The council has no responsibility for the maintenance of watercourses and land drainage (except on council-owned land). However, they may be able to offer general advice. The Environment Agency may undertake maintenance of some main river sections; however, the responsibility is still with the riparian owner.

Other

Public surface water sewers - these are drainage systems, usually piped, which are maintained by the water supplier. However, it is possible that the water supplier and waste disposal authorities are different organisations.

Highway drains - culverts under public roads, piped roadside ditches or other drainage that has been specifically built to drain the highway. The highway authority maintains these.

Authorities involved

The following organisations may be involved in direct specific action during a flooding event. Property owners are listed as it is their responsibility to protect their own property from flooding

Environment Agency

- Maintain flood defences
- Issuing flood warnings
- Receiving and recording details of all flooding incidents
- Monitoring the situation and advising other organisations
- Dealing with emergency repairs and blockages on main rivers and own structures.
- Respond to Rivers (Main) and Sea flooding
- Inform public and the media
- Check reservoir safety

- Category 1 responder
- Engage with communities

Wiltshire Council

- Co-ordinating emergency arrangements
- Maintaining safe conditions on the roads
- Putting flood warning signs on the roads
- Organising road closures and traffic diversions
- Clearing blockages on highway drainage systems
- Protect property from flooding by water from the highway (optional)
- Emergency assistance - providing sandbags (optional)
- Clearing blocked watercourses etc. (Land Drainage Act powers)
- Environmental health issues - pollution

Heytesbury, Imber and Knook Parish Council

- Preparation of Flood Plan and organisation of Community Emergency Volunteers
- Flood warning dissemination (by local agreement with Environment Agency)
- Provision of gel sacs/sandbags and other emergency equipment (if in stock)

Fire and rescue service

- Rescue
- Responding to all emergency incidents as required
- Assisting the populace where a need is identified and the use of fire service personnel and equipment is relevant.

Water company

- Emergency overpumping or tankering at pumping stations
- Clearing blockages in public sewers and outfall grills
- Repairing burst sewage and water pumping mains.

Property owners

The principal actions of owners of property at risk of flooding or which is flooded are:

- Moving to a safe area if life is at risk
- Preventing water from entering property if possible
- Switching off electricity and gas supplies at mains
- Moving valuable possessions above floor areas liable to be flooded.

Heytesbury Imber & Knook Parish Council Sandbag Policy

Reference Number:	This is an Annex to our Community Flood Plan	Issue Date:	15 January 2019
By:	Louise Morris	Amended:	12 March 2019

- Heytesbury Imber & Knook Parish Council has a similar Sandbag policy to that of Wiltshire Council.
- Neither the Parish Council nor Wiltshire Council has a duty to provide Sandbags or other temporary flood defences to residential and business properties although we will try to help where we can subject to supply and demand. It should be noted it is the property owners responsibility to protect their property from flooding.
- If you know your property is at risk of flooding it is strongly recommended that you make your own arrangements for sandbags or other defences as part of a pre-emptive flood defence plan and sign up for the Environment Agencies Floodline warning system.
- What Sandbags the Council has will be distributed on a 'needs' basis to properties at imminent risk of flooding. We will not supply sandbags to defend gardens, sheds, outbuildings or other such structures. We do not accept responsibility for the placing of flood defences although we will do our best to help property owners although manpower is prioritised to the elderly and disabled
- We will not supply sandbags or other temporary defences in advance based on forecasts. You cannot collect sandbags from the Parish Council.
- Once issued sandbags become the property of the property owner and it is the owners responsibility to dispose of them responsibly. Wiltshire Council can provide details of disposal sites
- The Parish Council only has limited supplies of sandbags which we would prioritise to the elderly, disabled, and those with young families before offering to other householders and businesses. We will provide only 10 sandbags per property (This is generally enough for 1 doorway)
- Whilst we appreciate flooding events are stressful and traumatic the Council will stop the distribution of sandbags if their volunteers are verbally or physically threatened
- Useful Links:
 - Helpful advice www.floodforum.org.uk
 - Supplier information www.blupages.org.uk
 - Floodline sign up www.environment-agency.gov.uk
 - Wiltshire Council www.wiltshire.gov.uk/communityandliving/civilemergencies/floodinganddrainage.htm
 - Local Builder Merchants for Sandbags and plastic sheeting