

Together with our partners, Somerset Council and the Environment Agency have been working closely together to respond to flooding when it occurs, and to support communities to recover. As climate change makes wetter winters and extreme weather events more likely, community resilience is more important than ever, and we will continue to support communities to be as prepared as they can be for flooding.

Please find attached a flood action guide with preparedness information, and a recovery guide for those recently affected by flooding. We would be grateful if you could share these on your website, to make them easily accessible to members of your community.

## Reporting Flooding

Reporting of flooding is crucial for incident response and also for long term planning of flood risk reduction measures. If your community has been impacted by flooding but it has not been reported, then the relevant authorities may not be aware of what has occurred.

- The portal for **non-emergency** reporting is the Flood Online Reporting Tool: [FORT - Home \(geowessex.com\)](https://www.geowessex.com). This information is shared with risk management authorities to ensure it goes to the correct organisation.

## In an emergency, if there is a risk to life, report flooding to 999.

- For other emergency reporting, who you report the flooding to will depend on the source of the flood: <https://www.gov.uk/report-flood-cause>
- For main rivers: Environment Agency incident hotline (24hr) 0800 80 70 60
- For ordinary watercourses / surface water / roads: Somerset Council [Report a problem on the road \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk)
- For sewage / burst mains: Wessex Water 0345 600 4 600 (24hr) [www.wessexwater.co.uk/your-wastewater/flooding/sewer-flooding](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/your-wastewater/flooding/sewer-flooding)

## Funding and Grants

- The Government's Flood Recovery Framework is used in exceptional circumstances to support councils and communities following severe flooding. [This has been activated](#) for the areas most affected by Storm Henk. [Somerset Council](#) have opened applications from residents or businesses who have been affected by flooding **between 2 – 12 January**. The closing date for applications is 29<sup>th</sup> March for Community Recovery Grants, or 31<sup>st</sup> March for Council Tax Discounts, Business Rates Discounts and Business Recovery Grants. [Flood Recovery from Storm Henk \(somerset.gov.uk\)](#)
- Households that were flooded between 2-12 January may also be able to apply for up to £5,000 to install Property Flood Resilience measures as part of flood repairs, and farms that have suffered uninsurable damage from Storm Henk may be able to apply for grants up to £25,000. Applications are not yet open for these schemes.
- Somerset Prepared provide grants of up to £5,000 for communities to purchase equipment that will help them to better respond to emergencies. For more information, please visit <https://www.somersetprepared.org.uk/get-support/funding-support>

- There are also grants available through a Wessex Water scheme:  
<https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/visit-and-learn/funding>

## Being Prepared

- If you have an emergency plan, it is advisable to regularly review and exercise the plan, to ensure the details are up to date and that individuals are clear on actions to take. Having a plan will help your community respond quickly to emergencies such as flooding, reducing stress and confusion, and helping to mitigate the impacts.
- Resources for creating an emergency plan are available online at <https://www.somersetprepared.org.uk/communities/> or <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-flood-plan-template/community-flood-plan>.
- If you would like support with creating or reviewing your community emergency plan, get in touch with us at [somersetprepared@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:somersetprepared@somerset.gov.uk) or [floodwessex@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:floodwessex@environment-agency.gov.uk).
- Some communities have community emergency volunteer or flood warden schemes. These volunteers do not do the job of the emergency services, but they can help a community enact its emergency plan, identify who is vulnerable and may need help, and in some cases communicate with the authorities.
- Communities Prepared is a national resilience programme that equips community emergency volunteers with the knowledge and confidence to prepare for and respond to emergencies. They have a free online hub: <https://www.communitiesprepared.org.uk/>. There are free self-led courses that include Flood Volunteer, What Happens During an Emergency, and Community Emergency Volunteer Coordinator.
- The Environment Agency supports community flood wardens and emergency volunteers by offering advice and guidance, and sending out a quarterly newsletter with useful information and news. Duty officers may also reach out to community contacts during an incident. If you would like to be added to the database please email [floodwessex@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:floodwessex@environment-agency.gov.uk).
- Somerset Council run an Emergency Community Contacts scheme, where nominated members of the community can be a first point of contact for agencies when an emergency is happening in your area: <https://www.somersetprepared.org.uk/get-involved/emergency-community-contacts/>
- You can also nominate appropriate buildings in your community for the Places of Safety scheme, which identifies appropriate facilities for emergency evacuations:  
<https://www.somersetprepared.org.uk/get-involved/shelter-and-support/>

We know that as well as the economic and physical impacts, flooding can have a serious effect on emotional wellbeing. Somerset Talking Therapies will treat referrals from those impacted by natural disasters as a priority. Referrals can be made via a GP or directly online: <https://www.somersetft.nhs.uk/somerset-talking-therapies/online-referral-form/>

We hope that these resources prove useful for you and your community. Together, we can be ready to respond and recover when emergencies occur.