



## Protecting yourself from the impact of flooding

Over the past years in Somerset, we have seen an increasing number of flooding incidents. Historically, flooding has been associated with overflowing rivers and moors. However, the increase in the number of intense localised downpours means that flooding can occur almost anywhere, before water has managed to get to a river or stream.

Before the creation of Somerset Council in April 2023, some former district councils would reactively supply sandbags to households and some businesses when at risk of flooding.

Driven by the need for a consistent policy across the Council area and weighing up many factors, **Somerset Council will not provide sandbags to residents or businesses from 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024.**

There is comprehensive information available to assist householders and businesses to create their own flood plans and community resilience.

[The Flood Hub](#)

**Householders and business owners have always been responsible for protecting their own property.**

With the heightened flooding risk across the area, it is vitally important to plan ahead and take preventative action.

The top three tips are:

1. **Make an emergency plan** to keep your property yourself and your loved ones safe if a flood were ever to occur. You can find more guidance on how to do this at [somerseprepared.org.uk/creating-a-home-emergency-plan/](https://somerseprepared.org.uk/creating-a-home-emergency-plan/), but at the very least it should contain:
  - ✓ a list of useful contacts details, security details (for insurance and utility companies, your bank, medical and veterinary facilities as well as for your Parish Council and Somerset Council)
  - ✓ an action plan for things to do before a flood happens (eg; turn off gas and electricity, move important items to safety etc)

Depending on the scale of the flooding, it may be some time before the emergency services can get to you, so we also recommend you **put together a flood kit** before you need it.

Again, there are some ideas on this same website, such as important documents, warm clothing and waterproofs, torch, drinking water and food, medicine, phones, and chargers and perhaps toys for children.

2. **Consider measures to protect your home.** This could be as simple as making sure that you have adequate insurance, but can also mean doing maintenance on exterior of the property, investing in property level flood protection equipment.

Check out [The Flood Hub](#) website, which has lots of useful advice and suggestions of what can be done and [bluepages.org.uk](https://bluepages.org.uk) points you towards suppliers.

3. **Think about others** in your community and what could happen to them if there was a flooding incident. It may be, for example, that some of your neighbours are more elderly and vulnerable and may need some help to stay safe.

There are many things as a community you can plan to keep yourselves safe. Simple measures such as checking that ditches and pipes are not blocked on a regular basis or having a number of people trained as volunteer Flood Wardens. We advise checking to see what plans your Parish Council has to respond to an emergency, so you know things like who to contact or where to find a place of safety if you need it.

By planning and taking action in advance, there is so much that you can be done to help reduce the risk of your property flooding in the first place, as well as to reduce the impact that any flooding has if it does happen.

Should your home become flooded internally i.e. not your garden, garage or shed - then please report this via **For flood reporting**.

One of our prime tasks is to capture real-time information and intelligence when there is a flooding incident. In times of flooding, we appreciate any photos sent via the **flooding@somerset.gov.uk** email address. This helps build a better picture of the issues which may need to be addressed.

Stay safe,

**Paul and Bel**

**Somerset Rivers Authority Community Engagement Officers (Part of the Somerset Prepared Partnership)**

### **Somerset Prepared**

Somerset Prepared is a multi-agency partnership working closely with communities to deliver advice, support, and training to help enhance local resilience to emergencies.

Partners include Avon & Somerset Police, British Red Cross, Community Council for Somerset, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service, Environment Agency, Rotary International, Safe South West (Treasurer), Somerset Council (Chair & Secretariat), Somerset Rivers Authority, South Western Ambulance Service and Spark Somerset.

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