

Your responsibilities...

- Identify if you are living in a flood risk area: visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk/floodline or call Floodline on 0845 9881188.
- Protect your home or property.
- Provide your own flood defences if necessary such as flood boards, etc. Visit the National Flood Forum website for more information www.floodforum.org.uk.
- Ensure your insurance covers you for flooding, alternative accommodation etc. Check whether insurance premiums can be reduced if you provide flood protection equipment.
- Register to receive Flood Warnings from the Environment Agency's free service, Floodline Warnings Direct. By registering for the service you will receive warnings to your phone, mobile, email or fax. To register, call Floodline on 0845 9881188.
- Prepare a flood plan, with key phone numbers, actions you should take, and essential items such as warm clothing, first aid kit, etc. A template for the flood plan is available in the "Preparing for a flood" leaflet provided by the Environment Agency. Call Floodline or visit their website (details above) to obtain a copy. Make sure all occupants of your property know what to do.
- Make sure you understand what the different organisations involved in flooding (Environment Agency, local authority, water company and emergency services) are responsible for in your area.
- Consider working with your community/town/parish to develop an emergency flood plan, in conjunction with the Environment Agency, Parish/Town Council, Police and Fire and Rescue services so you are clear on who is responsible for what during a flood.
- Ensure land drainage on your property is functioning correctly.

Your responsibilities...

- Make sure you know your responsibilities if you are a riparian owner (property owner or resident whose property is adjacent to a river, stream, brook, drainage ditch, culvert or other watercourse).
- Recover from the flood, repair your building. More information is available in the Environment Agency's "During a flood" and "After a flood" leaflets. Call Floodline or visit their website (details above) to obtain copies.
- Arrange alternative accommodation if your home or property is uninhabitable (and check your insurance covers the costs). Speak to your insurance company before disposing of any flood damaged items.
- Dispose of debris and furniture and other flood damaged items from your home in a legal manner.

Remember, in a flood crisis Emergency Services will be overstretched.



Environment Agency responsibilities...



The Environment Agency will:

- Monitor and forecast river levels.
- Issue flood warnings.
- Receive and record details of flooding incidents.
- Check the situation and advise other organisations.
- Deal with emergency repairs and blockages on main rivers.
- Look into pollution problems.

Do you know the Flood Warning Codes?



Flooding of low-lying land and roads is expected. Be aware, be prepared, watch out.



Flooding of homes and businesses is expected. Act now!



Severe flooding is expected. There is extreme danger to life and property. Act now!



Flood watches or warnings are no longer in force for this area.

If you receive a flood warning, call Floodline on [0845 9881188](tel:08459881188) for regularly updated localised information. To get directly to your local information, choose option 1 and enter your quick-dial number which can be found by calling Floodline and pressing 4 to speak to an operator. You may also be able to register to receive flood warnings.

Calls to Floodline 0845 988 1188 are not free. BT calls cost up to 4p/min plus 6p set-up fee from your home. Other providers may vary.



Thames Timeline

- July 2007** Between 19 and 20 July 2007, more than 50mm of rain fell on Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire in 24 hours. This came after an exceptionally wet May and June with well above average rainfall across the Thames region. Tens of thousands of properties across the country were affected, including many in Oxford, Abingdon, Witney, Wokingham and Wantage.
- 2003** Heavy, persistent rainfall causes widespread flooding across the Thames Valley. Flood levels were the worst since 1947 and even higher in some locations. Areas badly affected included Purley, Oxford, Shiplake, Abingdon, Wraybury, Chertsey, Marlow, Bisham, Cookham and Staines.
- 2000/01** Serious flooding affected many areas after prolonged rainfall. Areas affected included Abingdon, Shiplake, Guildford, Byfleet, Weybridge, Wendlebury and Bicester.
- 1998** Easter floods were the worst in history along the River Cherwell catchment with almost 550 properties flooded and the mainline train station closed at Banbury.
- 1995** River and Rowing Museum site in Henley flooded while the building was under construction.
- 1994** Houses in Henley flooded after a water pumping station failed to cope with heavy rain during a severe summer storm.
- 1990** 500 houses in Maidenhead flooded. Other towns, including Henley, were also badly affected.
- 1975** Severe thunderstorms and 140mm of rain in two hours caused flooding and washed cars away in Hampstead, London.
- 1966** Permission given to build the Thames Barrier at Woolwich.
- 1953** 300 people lost their lives during serious tidal flooding in the Thames estuary.
- 1947** Towns along the Thames suffered some of the worst flooding in history.
- 1933** A raft had to be built at Henley to allow Oxford University to get their boat afloat when Leander Club was flooded during training for the Boat Race.
- 1928** 14 people drowned during serious flooding in London. Discussions about Gravesend barrage re-opened.
- 1910** 110mm of rain fell in Oxford.
- 1907** A barrage across the Thames at Gravesend was proposed.

Thames Timeline

- 1894 Serious flooding along the whole of the River Thames.
- 1877 High tides on the Thames caused damaged estimated at half a million pounds.
- 1852 The Duke of Wellington's funeral hearse was upset on the flooded Bath Road in Maidenhead.
- 1809 George III was stranded at Windsor when the bridge at Eton was washed away and the ford at Datchet was impassable.
- 1795 Heavy floods in February. At Staines, the Southampton coach was upset while passing through deep water. Carriages could only pass through Maidenhead by letting water pass through their open doors.
- 1774 The original wooden bridge in Henley, which had been there since 1530, was washed away by a great flood.
- 1763 The meadows along the Thames - from its source in Kemble in Gloucestershire to the sea - were flooded.
- 1663 An entry in Samuel Pepys' diary for 7 December reads "There was last night the greatest tide that ever was remembered in England to have been in this river, all Whitehall having been drowned".
- 1579 Westminster Hall flooded so severely that fish were found on the floor when the water went down.
- 1531 Following the "Gret wyndes and fluddes" of the previous year, Henry VIII passed an act of parliament to tax and punish persons liable for the upkeep of sewers and walls in areas susceptible to flooding. Punishments included an hour in the stocks or being sent to Maidstone jail.
- 1236 The river rose so high in London that "in the great palace of Westminster men did row with wherries in the midst of the hall".
- 1090 London Bridge destroyed by flooding.
- 48AD Floods extended over four counties around London. 10,000 drowned.
- 9AD The first recorded flood on the Thames.

Emergency Services responsibilities...



Fire and rescue service

- Save life and rescue trapped people.
- Assist in the evacuation of people in danger.

Police

- Protect life - conduct rescue operations to safeguard lives.
- Assist in the evacuation of people in danger.
- Assist in providing public information.
- Advise and assist with road closures.

Ambulance service

- Provide life-saving treatment.
- Arrange transport to hospital for those who require urgent medical care.



Local authorities

County councils and unitary authorities will:

Do as much as they can to:

- Keep the roads safe.
- Put flood warning signs on the roads.
- Close roads and divert traffic.
- Clear blockages on highway drainage systems.
- Enforce maintenance of land drainage by riparian owners* where the highway is affected.
- Protect properties from flooding from the highway if drainage fails.

District councils will:

Do as much as they can to:

- Give emergency help and provide sandbags if resources allow.
- Deal with environmental health issues like pollution.
- Clean streets.
- Provide temporary emergency accommodation if possible; and
- Enforce maintenance of critical watercourses by riparian owners*.

Town and parish councils will:

Do as much as they can to:

- Advise other organisations about local flooding issues.
- Give flood warnings (by local agreement with the Environment Agency, does not happen in every town/parish).
- Will support the distribution of sandbags; and
- Help arrange alternative accommodation for those made homeless.



* riparian owner = property owners and residents whose property is adjacent to a river, stream, brook, drainage ditch, culvert or other watercourse.