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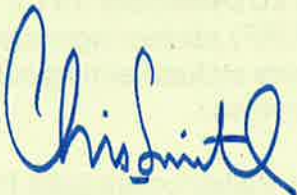
Dear David,

Flood Warning System

Thank you for your letter of 6 March 2014. I apologise for any confusion experienced during the recent flooding. We are looking at our flood warning system as part of our extensive evaluation of the flood event. However, we believe on this occasion our flood warning system operated as intended.

I have attached an appendix that gives more detail of our flood warnings and answers your concerns. I hope you find this information useful.

If you would like to discuss this further please contact Ian Tomes, Area Flood Risk Manager, who will be happy to help you. You can contact Ian on 01252 729540, at ian.tomes@environment-agency.gov.uk or at Environment Agency, Gold Crest House, Alice Holt Lodge, Farnham, Surrey GU10 4LH.

Yours sincerely 

**RT HON LORD SMITH OF FINSBURY
CHAIRMAN**

Appendix – Flood Warnings

We aim to give at least two hours' notice from when we issue a Flood Warning before the onset of property flooding, however, this is not always possible. Rivers can rise extremely quickly in response to heavy and persistent rainfall and we may have less than two hours' notice that a river will flood.

In Windsor and Maidenhead, our Jubilee River Flood Alleviation Scheme protects approximately 3,200 homes. However, there are parts of Old Windsor, Wraysbury and Datchet that are not protected by this scheme. These areas are covered by our Flood Warning service and we issued warnings during the January flood event.

We issued the first flood warnings for Old Windsor and Wraysbury on Sunday 5 January 2014 at 17:28 hours. We sent the warnings to the 32 properties closest to the River Thames in Old Windsor and 248 properties closest to the Thames in Wraysbury. We expected property flooding to start the following morning.

We then issued a flood warning on Tuesday 7 January 2014 at 03.23 hours to 16 properties closest to the Thames in Datchet. We also expected flooding to property later that same morning.

As the Thames continued to rise and the flooding extent spread on the ground, we issued the flood warnings to the remaining properties at flood risk in these three locations:

- On Wednesday 8 January 2014 at 19.31 hours to 1,829 properties in Datchet
- On Wednesday 8 January 2014 at 22.08 hours to 929 properties in Wraysbury (with the expectation of further property flooding to occur later that evening and overnight)
- On Thursday 9 January 2014 at 13.28 hours to 1,572 properties in Old Windsor (with the expectation of further property flooding to occur the following morning)

We provided flood risk information to the emergency planners at the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. On Friday the 20 December 2013, we first advised our Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (TVLRF) partner agencies of the potential for flooding. Our Local Resilience Forum partners include emergency planning staff from local authorities and the emergency services.

We then had daily telecons with our Thames Valley colleagues from Monday 23 December 2013 through to the 14 January 2014 to provide updates on the flooding outlook and the expected impacts.