

The Flooding Bible

Compiled by Graham Sinclair, head flood warden in Wraysbury for 30 years. Based on experience, local knowledge and common sense.

You: Yes **YOU** are most important

If when a flood is over and there has been no loss of life or serious injury it can be considered a successful event.

- Never **ever** risk your life, or the life of someone else trying to save you, for property or a pet.
- Try at all times to keep calm, listen to what flood wardens say. Never lose your temper, try not to argue or waste their time, they are trying to help you and they also have homes and family to protect.
- Never be without your wellies.
- And never wade barefoot in floodwater - the slightest cut in sewage could result in losing a leg.

Elderly, disabled, or villagers who are unwell

Priority must be given to them. We need a responsible person from every road that is liable to flood to prepare a document, listing all folk who fall into this group, with their names addresses and phone numbers. We need this as soon as possible.

Flood box

Have a flood box containing:-

- A torch.
- Matches.
- Candles.
- Heavy duty bin liners.
- A strong ball of string.
- A roll of duct tape.
- Bottled water for taking medication.
- etc.

Write all important phone numbers in large print (you may well have lost your glasses) on the outside, and quick dial numbers.

Also

- Some chocolate and food for your pets.
- Some of the very strong super market bags.

Keep your mobile well charged and only use for important calls.

Your home

Prepare for a flood well in advance:-

- Make sure you know where your gas, electric, and water cut off taps are.
- Needless to say if you live in a house get as much upstairs.
- If you live in a bungalow I will demonstrate a few ways of saving things at the public meeting we are planning - sealing a door etc.
- We are trying to track down where you can get industrial plastic boxes - 4 boxes and 3 8ft scaffold planks can make a raft 8ft by 6ft to raise furniture etc 14 inches,
- 2 H/Duty bin liners can save over a £1000.00 worth of clothes, shoes etc, when tied together and hung over a door.
- The same applies to all those old photos, letters and valuable documents, which mean so much to you, when put in 2 super market bags, tied together and hung over a door.
- If you have a valuable table, put a h/duty bin liner over each leg and tape it on. Leave no air in the bag and place any heavy property on the table.
- Sand bags will be bought as near to your homes as possible.
- If you are fit and well do your best to help wardens with them and also help older folk.
- Sand bags are to protect homes not garages - try not to be greedy.
- Use a plastic membrane to make them more efficient. This will be demonstrated at the flood meeting.
- Remember to secure your wheelie bins to a fence or gate in an upright position

Your pets

They are most important but don't risk your life for them.

- Pre-plan where a friend can keep them for you.
- Don't run out of pet food and clean water.
- Have a large plastic mat and plenty of newspaper so as to protect carpets if they can't get outside.

Vehicles

- If you have surplus vehicles get them to a friend's house well out of the way.
- Park the vehicle you need in a sensible manner so emergency vehicles can get by.
- Don't block other people entrances - they may need to get out quickly as water rises.
- Leave a note on your dashboard with your name and phone number so marshals can contact you.
Drive through flood water slowly, so as not to create a bow wave - driving slowly will lessen the chance of flooding an engine.
- Do not drive around just looking - people are trying to help others and time is important.

Toilets

Usually the sewage set up fails.

- Try to borrow or buy from a caravan shop or marina or even amazon a porta potti. It will last a lifetime and always be useful.

- The borough will help, but the worse a flood, the busier they are. Plus, it's nice to have your own personal loo. Try to use the toilets elsewhere whenever you can.

Boats

Most boaters will already know this. but if you are new to boating and floods this will help.

- Needless to say your boat will be facing upstream. Lower your anchor about 5 ft towards the centre of the river with as much chain as you have. A stern anchor if you have one will also help, lowered in the same manner. This will hold your boat away from the bank
- Ensure your ropes are firmly secured to your boat
- Use as long a mooring rope as possible, allowing for a rise of some 6 to 7 ft and it should be adjustable from the bank
- Ensure all gas and fuel lines are switched off.
- Never try to get on board your boat during a flood.
- Use additional ropes to stop the boat moving backwards, or forwards.
- Needless to say you will have poles to stop the boat ending up on the lawn, although the anchors will help in this direction.

Crime

- Yes there are always thieves about who will take advantage of a situation
- Get valuables to a friend's home
- Always secure your home and keep things out of sight when left in your car.
- Also leave your spare key at a friend's - you may well mislay yours and not be able to get back into your home to get it

The future

We **must** continue to petition the EA to dredge the river and ensure that the borough maintain our streams and drains, so the floodplain is not saturated before we get a flood. Also, flood banks **must** be repaired.

Graham Sinclair