



A Guide to the Role of Community Emergency Wardens



What is a Community Emergency Warden Scheme?

Community Emergency Warden schemes are completely voluntary, and can consist of a single person or several people acting as volunteers to help raise awareness of any flood risks in their community, help pass on flood warnings when they are issued, help prepare for flooding and to help vulnerable people both during and after flooding has occurred. A Community Emergency Warden may also be part of another group such as Neighbourhood Watch or the Parish Council.

Community Emergency Wardens are an important part of the local community, but can also play a key role in assisting the Environment Agency, water authority, local and county councils with local information on flood conditions. For example; before or during a potential flooding event the Community Emergency Wardens may be contacted to give an account of ground conditions, water levels, weather, etc, to help the Emergency Planning team and Environment Agency activate relevant plans and to coordinate an appropriate response across the county.

Community Emergency Wardens may notice or have been given information about a blocked watercourse, culvert, drain or burst pipe. The Community Emergency Warden should then report this to the relevant agency so that the necessary remedial action is carried out. By doing this, watercourses will be kept flowing unobstructed thus reducing the risk of local flooding.



Locally appointed Community Emergency Wardens are important because:

- Local people will know the Community Emergency Warden personally, leading to mutual trust and understanding.
- Local people are more likely to accept warnings and advice which are reinforced by a familiar local person.
- A local Community Emergency Warden would be familiar with those people and properties at risk. They could distribute leaflets on flood warning and emergency response arrangements to properties at risk of flooding and ensure people receive and understand them.
- A local Community Emergency Warden would be able to provide the Environment Agency and Local Resilience Forum (LRF) with local information during a flood event and confirm conditions on the ground. An important two-way information link would be established.

Community Emergency Wardens can:

- Encourage communities to help themselves with training and support from the Environment Agency, local and county councils and emergency services.
- Develop good local communication links with other local groups for passing out information and receiving feedback.
- Help build partnerships which would bring improvements in flood preparedness and response such as with Neighbourhood Watch and Parish Councils.



What would a Community Emergency Warden do?

The role of the Community Emergency Warden is primarily one of communication, and there are many ways in which a Community Emergency Warden can help their local community in times of flood. These include:

- Assist with the creation and maintenance of the Community Flood Plan with the Environment Agency and councils.
- Monitor the condition of local drains, culverts, brooks and other watercourses and report any defects or blockages to the appropriate agency.
- Distributing flood related information to the public.
- Encouraging individuals to sign up to the Environment Agency free flood warning service, Floodline Warnings Direct (FWD) where available.
- Making arrangements to reinforce flood warnings when they are issued.
- Visit people at risk to ensure that warnings have been received.
- Call for assistance on behalf of people who are struggling to carry out essential actions to safeguard themselves or their property.
- Have local knowledge and information on the latest flood situation (the Environment Agency will help with this).
- Liaise with the Environment Agency, councils and emergency services on local conditions and needs on the ground.
- Note and report local flood event details.
- If possible set up local patrols to monitor the situation.

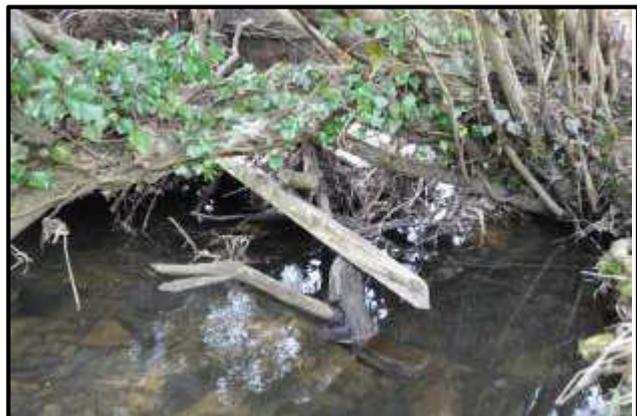
What must a Community Emergency Warden never do?

Community Emergency Wardens should never place themselves in a position where their own personal safety is at risk.

In particular, they should not –

- Enter any flood water whatsoever.
- Put themselves at risk to attempt any form of rescue operation.
- Attempt to clear blocked drains, gullies, ditches or watercourses.

They should always call the emergency services or the relevant agency to deal with such situations.



What equipment does a Community Emergency Warden need?

Community Emergency Wardens are issued with several things to assist them in their role and to identify them as Community Emergency Wardens.

- A high visibility vest clearly marked “Emergency Warden”.
- A Community Flood Plan, created in partnership with the Environment Agency and council, containing: -
 - A detailed map of areas at risk of flooding.
 - Contact details of all relevant agencies and emergency services.
- Correspondence, leaflets and information relating to Flood Warning arrangements (for issuing to local residents and businesses).

Other support that can be provided at ground level

The Community Emergency Warden and/or Parish Council could also: -

- Enlist able bodied personnel to assist with helping people in their homes, especially the elderly, disabled and those awaiting evacuation.

And

- Be aware of those in the community who have access to tractors, pumps, boats, generators, winching equipment and 4-wheel drive vehicles.

Flood Warning Service

The Environment Agency provides a flood warning service for most main rivers, estuaries and along the coast. It cannot provide a service for all watercourses.

Rivers and streams that rise rapidly in response to rainfall cause particular difficulties because there is insufficient time to issue specific warnings. In some localities a general warning service is provided; in others it is not possible to provide a warning service at all. The Environment Agency does not provide a warning service in respect of local flooding from sewers, road drainage, overland flow, dam bursts or blockages.

More information about the Environment Agency flood warning service can be found here: www.gov.uk/prepare-for-a-flood

Using the latest available technology, our staff monitors rainfall, river levels and sea conditions 24 hours a day and use this information to forecast the possibility of flooding. If flooding is forecast, we issue warnings using a set of three different warning types, shown to the right.

Floodline Warnings Direct (FWD) is a free service which sends you a direct message when flooding is expected and may affect your property. Flood warnings will give you time to prepare for flooding which could save you time, money and heartache. You can receive warnings by telephone, mobile, email, SMS text message or fax, whichever you prefer.

You can sign up for Floodline Warnings Direct by calling Floodline on **0345 988 1188** or **0845 988 1188** or online at www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings



FLOOD ALERT



FLOOD WARNING

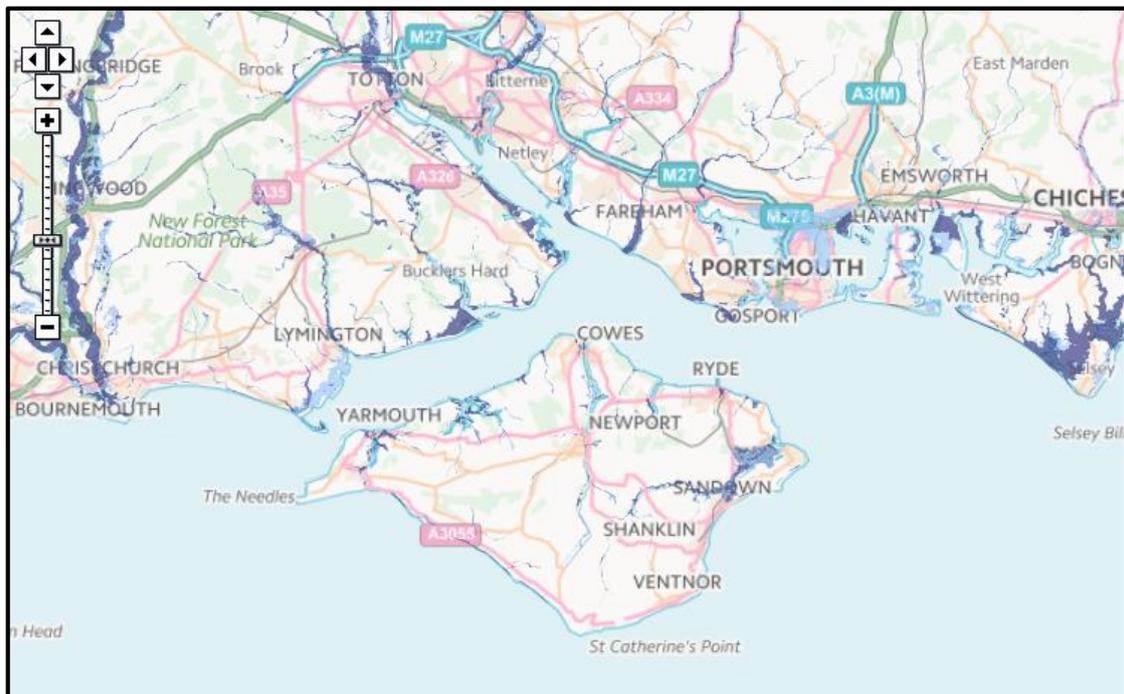


**SEVERE FLOOD
WARNING**

Flood Risk and Flood Maps

The Flood Map is a multi-layered map which provides information on flooding from rivers and the sea for England. The Flood Map takes into account areas that benefit from flood defences.

The map is available from our website, www.gov.uk/prepare-for-a-flood.



What does the Flood Map show?

The map shows the likelihood of flooding for rivers and the sea in any given year.

 High	Greater than or equal to 1 in 30 (3.3%) chance in any given year
 Medium	Less than 1 in 30 (3.3%) but greater than or equal to 1 in 100 (1%) chance in any given year
 Low	Less than 1 in 100 (1%) but greater than or equal to 1 in 1000 (0.1%) chance in any given year
 Very Low	Less than 1 in 1000 (0.1%) chance in any given year.

You will also find maps on our website that show the risk to an area from surface water and reservoir flooding. Surface water flooding is managed by your lead local flood authority and reservoir flooding by your local authority.

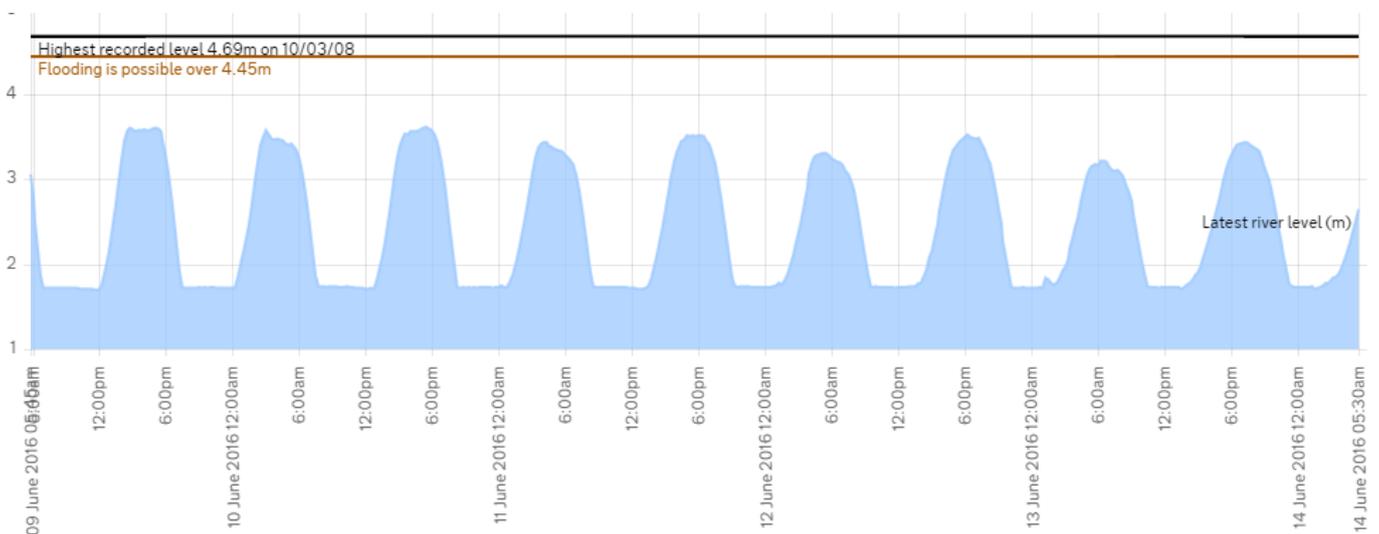
River and Sea Levels Online

We know that many people and businesses need good, up to date information about river and sea levels. We offer you easy to access online river and sea level information from monitoring stations across England. Visit our website, www.gov.uk/check-if-youre-at-risk-of-flooding, to access the information.

To help us do this we have monitoring stations across England where we measure the levels of rivers, lakes, sea and groundwater. We also measure the flows of rivers and the amount of rainfall we get. Most of the river and sea level measurements are taken electronically and automatically sent to our databases used by our forecasting systems. These water level measurements are also sent straight to our website and published online. The information will be updated daily, and in some cases, when water levels are high, the information may be updated more regularly.

The river level 'thermometer', shown left, tells you the latest water level at a particular point. It also includes information to help you put this in context, such as the highest level recorded and the level where flooding is possible. There is also a written summary of the data, including the date and time of the last published river level.

The recent water level graph shows the water levels over the last 48 hours, along with information to help put these in context. You will also find information about the monitoring station where the measurements have been taken, including its name and the river it is on.



Flood Warning and Emergency Response: A wider picture

A major flooding incident is one which involves the flooding of a significant number of properties, or significant disruption to key parts of the local infrastructure.

The response to flooding involves several organisations performing key roles at the local level to be fully integrated and effective.

The response also requires special arrangements being put into place by one or more of the emergency services, the local authority and the Environment Agency.

Examples of these special arrangements may consist of the activation of Major Incident Plans, opening of Emergency Rest Centres and the co-ordination of voluntary services such as the British Red Cross.

Here is a brief guide to the different agencies who may become involved in a major flood incident and the role each will play:

The Environment Agency

- Is responsible for flood defences and the issuing of flood warnings in England.
- Provides the Floodline (03459 88 11 88 or 08459 88 11 88) service.

The Met Office

- Provides weather forecasts, including severe weather alerts.
- Work with the Environment Agency at the Flood Forecasting Centre to provide a flood risk forecast.

Lead Local Flood Authority

- IW Council
- Prepare and maintain a strategy for local flood risk management in their areas.
- Investigate significant local flooding incidents and publish the results of such investigations.
- Play a lead role in emergency planning and recovery after a flood event.

Local Authorities

- Set up rest centres for people evacuated from their homes and arrange temporary accommodation.
- Deal with road closures caused by overflowing drains and sewers.

The Police

- Co-ordinate the emergency services in a major flood incident and help with evacuation of people from their homes where necessary.

The Fire and Rescue Service

- Is responsible primarily for rescue, recovery and saving life.
- May (subject to operational requirements) pump out flood water. [There may be a charge to householders for this service].

The Ambulance Service

- Is primarily responsible for saving life.

Community Emergency Wardens

- Passing on flood warning information received from the Environment Agency.
- Reporting problems with local watercourses which may cause flooding.
- Represent the local community in flood related matters.

Public Utility Companies

- Secure their services and equipment to ensure continuity of supply.
- Repair services disrupted by flood events.
- Provide alternative means of supply during disruption if life and health risks are identified such as drinking water bowsers.
- Advise local authorities and the media when disrupted services will be reinstated.

The Media

- Issue flood warnings received from the Environment Agency to agreed standards.
- Issue updated information during a flood event.
- Issue 'All Clear' Messages received from the Environment Agency to agreed standards.
- IW Radio
- BBC Radio Solent

Citizens Advice Bureau (Islehelp)

- Can give advice on how to obtain money in an emergency.
- Help to deal with insurance queries.

Voluntary Services

- Can assist in staffing emergency rest centres.
- Can assist in providing refreshments and support for the emergency services.
- Can assist in many other ways depending on which charity/voluntary organisations are involved.

People

Emergency Management: IW Council **01983 823316** (out of office hours **01983 821105**)

The Council's Emergency Management Service is concerned with the well-being of the community and environment during and after emergency situations. This ranges from coordinating the clean-up operation to caring for a section of the resident or visiting population which finds itself in need as a result of fire, flood or similar serious event.

Social Services (Adult): IW Council **01983 814980**

Social Services (Child): IW Council **0300 300 0117**

Age UK (IW) – help for over 50s: **01983 525282** (handyman, befriending, benefits etc)

Fire & Rescue (non-emergency - Fire hazards): **01983 525121**

Utilities Priority Service Register, for vulnerable customers- see separate sheet.

NHS non-emergency guidance: **111**

Water

Highway Flooding (sandbags and pumping)

Island Roads: **01983 822440**

Emergency - call 999 - Fire & Rescue

Water mains/Sewage/Drainage –Burst/Leaking/Blocked

Southern Water Leakline: **0800 820 999**

Kerbside gully and drains IWC Highways department: **01983 823777**

Pollution to Waterway or Flood Risk e.g. by oil / chemicals / sewage

Environment Agency: **0800 80 70 60**

Floodline: **0345 988 1188**

Gas

Emergency: **0800 111 999**

Electricity – Emergency: **0800 072 7282**

Highways and Open Spaces etc

Footpaths – blocked or obstructed

IW Council: **01983 821000**

Parks, Open Spaces and Beaches

IW Council: **01983 821000**

Rubbish and recycling

Missed Collection.

IW council: **01983 823777**

Litter/ Rubbish / Dumped Vehicles

On public footpaths or highways

Island Roads: **01983 822440**

In parks and open spaces: **01983 821000**

On private land Contact: **Landowner**

Fly-Tipping of Hazardous Waste or Large Amounts of Industrial Waste

Environment Agency: **0800 807060**

Fly-Tipping of Household Waste or Small Amounts of Commercial Waste

IW Council Environmental Health: **01983 823000** (or out of hours: **01983 821105**)

Animals

Injured Wildlife: Swans, Birds, Bats etc

RSPCA: **01983 840287**

Wildlife and Their Habitats – Killing, Destruction or Damage

Police Wildlife Liaison Officer: **0845 045 45 45**