

# **COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND EMERGENCY PLAN**

**EMERGENCY CO-ORDINATOR - CLERK TO ATWORTH PARISH COUNCIL**

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**This plan gives general guidance to the local community, outlines actions to be taken by responsible groups and organisations, and recognises that it is complementary to existing County and Emergency Services plans.**

#### **Disclaimer**

**Atworth Parish Council accepts no liability for any loss or damage arising directly or indirectly from action taken or not taken in reliance on material or information contained within this Flood Plan, or for any failure to activate the plan or to carry out any planned activities in response to a flood alert or warning issued to or by the Emergency Plan Working Group.**

## Stakeholders

1. Chairman of Atworth Parish Council – Effie Gale-Sides
2. Wiltshire Police – [REDACTED]
3. Village Hall – Councillor Richard Clark
4. St Michael's Parish Church Atworth – Revd [REDACTED]
5. Chalfield Manor Great Chalfield – [REDACTED]
6. Independent Church – [REDACTED]
7. The White Hart Inn – 01225 702274 info@whitehartatworth.co.uk
8. Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator – Councillor Effie-Gale-Sides
9. WI Chairman – [REDACTED]
10. Stonar School –
11. Neston Park - [REDACTED]
12. Wiltshire Council Emergency Planning Liaison Officer - n/k
13. Neighbouring Parish Council(s) Emergency Planning Officers
  - a. Melksham Town
  - b. Melksham Without
  - c. Broughton Gifford

## Atworth Parish Council, List of Councillors (from May 2017) – these are also by default EMERGENCY WARDENS

<b>Mrs Effie Gale-Sides (Chair)</b> Atford House 194A Bath Road SN12 8HF Tel: 01225 702228 Email: <a href="mailto:effie.gale-sides@atworth.org">effie.gale-sides@atworth.org</a>	<b>Mr Richard Clark</b> 56 Bath Road Atworth SN12 8JY Tel: 01225 708110 Email: <a href="mailto:richard.clark2@talktalk.net">richard.clark2@talktalk.net</a>
<b>Sarah Horrell</b> 128 Bath Road, Atworth SN12 8HW <a href="mailto:sarahhodd85@hotmail.com">sarahhodd85@hotmail.com</a>	<b>Kathleen Hartley</b> 6 Mead Park, Atworth SN12 8JS Tel. 01225 707191
<b>Philippa Gray</b> Ganbrook Farm Broughton Gifford, Melksham SN12 8NR email: <a href="mailto:grayp@parliament.co.uk">grayp@parliament.co.uk</a> Tel. 07876208725	<b>Arnold Snowball</b> 28 Bath Road Atworth, Melksham SN12 8JW email: <a href="mailto:jarnoldsnowball@gmail.com">jarnoldsnowball@gmail.com</a> Tel. 01225 708366

## Aim and Objectives

**Aim – to harness local resources and expertise to enable the community to help itself in a way that complements the response of the emergency services**

### **Objectives**

- \* **Identify hazards and possible mitigation**
- \* **Identify vulnerable groups within the community**
- \* **Identify key contacts**
- \* **Identify a community emergency management team**
- \* **Identify resources available to the community in the event of an emergency**

## Activation of the Plan

**The Plan will be activated when a member of the Emergency Team considers it necessary to take action in response to an incident and when action cannot be taken effectively without triggering the arrangements outlined in this document.**

## Emergency Team

**Members of the emergency team include the following:**

- \* **Cllr. Effie Gale-Sides – Chair of the Parish Council**
- \* **Phil McMullen – Parish Clerk**
- \* **Other Councillors - on an as required basis**
- \* **Other members of the community as appropriate**

## Flood Container

**An emergency supplies container is located in Atworth Business Park. Keys to the container are held by the Clerk and the Chair of the Council.**

## Incident Room

**An incident room will be established in one of the following two locations:**

<b>Village Hall</b>			
<b>Address</b>	56 BATH ROAD ATWORTH MELKSHAM WILTSHIRE SN12 8JY		
<b>Building phone</b>	none		
<b>Max capacity</b>	50	<b>Parking spaces</b>	6

<b>Kitchen</b>	yes
<b>Toilets</b>	yes
<b>Showers</b>	yes
<b>Overnight accommodation</b>	no
<b>Other Facilities</b>	
<b>Wifi code</b>	none
<b>Extra info</b>	

<b>Key holders</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████

<b>Church Hall</b>			
<b>Address</b>	Atworth		
<b>Building phone</b>	none		
<b>Max capacity</b>	50	<b>Parking spaces</b>	0
<b>Kitchen</b>	yes		
<b>Toilets</b>	yes		
<b>Showers</b>	no		
<b>Overnight accommodation</b>	no		
<b>Other Facilities</b>	none		
<b>Wifi code</b>	no		
<b>Extra info</b>			

<b>Key holders</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████

## Initial Actions

- \* **Gather as much information about the situation as possible**
- \* **Make contact with the emergency services**
- \* **Consider whether you can work safely from your current location or need to move**
- \* **Consider whether you need the Parish Council emergency team**
- \* **Arrange for contact to be made with those vulnerable members of the community**
- \* **Arrange for community resources/organisations to be made available**
- \* **Consider whether any additional members of the community need to be involved**

## Potential hazards

1. **Flooding**
2. **Total or partial loss of electricity**
3. **Total or partial loss of water**
4. **Total or partial loss of telephone**
5. **Major fire**
6. **Major road accident/loss of road access**
7. **Major aircraft accident**
8. **Major storm damage**
9. **Chemical spillage**
10. **Disease**

## Role of Emergency Co-ordinator

- \* **To maintain the Community Emergency Plan**
- \* **To provide a link with the County Emergency Planning Officers**

- \* **To call a community meeting (if required)**
- \* **To provide the focal community response to an emergency**

### **Preparation for an emergency**

To allow yourself to be prepared for an emergency you should take time to find out:

Where and how you turn off water and electricity supplies to your home  
 The emergency procedures for your children at school  
 The emergency procedures for your place of work  
 How you would stay in contact with your family  
 If any elderly or vulnerable people might need your help  
 How to tune into your local radio station  
 How to contact your household insurers

Ensure you keep a stock of bottled water, ready to eat food and a bottle/tin opener  
 Stock up on oil, wood, bottled gas or coal if a cold Winter is predicted

Sign up to the free flood warning service offered by the Environment Agency using [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk) or by calling 0845 988 1188

Know a vulnerable person who would be in difficulty during a power cut? they use a stairlift? have dementia? on dialysis? Then please encourage them to sign up for the Priority Services Register.  
<https://www.ssen.co.uk/PriorityServicesRegister/>

Do you know a vulnerable person that would be affected by the loss of their gas supply? Encourage them to apply to the Priority Register Service with your gas supplier.

Services include:

The provision of alternative heating and cooking appliances if your gas supply is interrupted  
 A password so you know our engineers are genuine. Moving your gas meter if you can't access it  
 A free gas safety check for your appliances if everyone at the property is eligible to register.  
 If you are: registered disabled, chronically sick, a pensioner, or have any other specific needs such as hearing, sight or access requirements please let them know and they'll do all they can to be there for you throughout their works. You can contact their customer service team on freephone 0800 912 29 99  
<http://www.wvutilities.co.uk/services/safe-warm/>

### **What should you do in an emergency?**

Call 999 if there are people injured or a threat to life exists

#### **DO NOT PUT YOURSELF IN DANGER**

Listen to the advice of the emergency services  
 Stay calm and think before taking any action  
 Try to help others and be reassuring  
 If you are not involved or might be in danger – **GO IN, STAY IN, TUNE IN** to the local radio

### **What should you do if you might have to evacuate your home?**

Gather together:

A list of useful telephone numbers e.g. doctor and close relatives, home and car keys  
 Toiletries, sanitary supplies and prescribed medication

Battery radio with spare batteries (or a wind-up radio)  
Torch with spare batteries (or a wind-up torch)  
First aid kit  
Mobile phone  
Cash and credit cards  
Legal documents e.g. insurance policies, car registration forms, birth certificates  
Spare clothes and blankets

If you have time

Turn off electricity, gas and water supplies Unplug appliances  
Lock all doors and windows  
If you leave by car, take bottled water, blankets and tune in to your local radio station (BBC Radio Wiltshire 103.5 FM)

### **Vulnerable Groups in the Community**

Get to know your neighbours and their strengths and where they might need help in an emergency.

### **Flood hazard and major storm damage**

If flooding is threatened you should contact the Environment Agency's Floodline. You can contact Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or 0845 988 1188. You can also check flood warning information online at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). Note that Floodline cannot provide detailed information about weather or travelling conditions.

### **Sandbags.**

*Atworth Parish Council has a small supply of emergency sand bags stored in the Flooding Container in Atworth Business Park, Bath Road.*

Wiltshire Council may not be in a position to supply sandbags in the event of an emergency and householders should make their own arrangements. Most DIY stores stock them. Alternatively, pieces of wood 12 – 15 inches high and about an inch thick, cut to cover the outside of your doors, can also provide an effective watertight seal, especially if wrapped in a wet towel or newspaper and nailed to the door jambs. Remember to cover up air bricks on external walls.

**Synthetic absorbent bags.** These are a modern version of sandbags and can be bought empty or filled from most DIY stores. They can be filled with either wet earth or sand and will provide an effective seal.

**Sewers and drains.** Using no-return valves, plugs, bungs and fixing drain covers can reduce flooding in these areas. Most builders' merchants will advise on this.

**Valuables and Documents.** Take anything of value upstairs or store above the likely water level at the first sign of a problem.

**Coping with a flood.** Call your insurance company; check the classified telephone directories under 'Flood Damage' for suppliers of cleaning materials and equipment to dry out your home; contact the gas, electricity and water companies to have your supplies checked before you turn them back on; open doors and windows to ventilate your home; remember to unblock your airbricks when the water has receded; restock any used supplies for the next time! **BEWARE** of contamination and wear protective clothing.

If your property and possessions are damaged as a result of flooding, or you incur extra expenses, you should make a claim on your insurance.

The Association of British Insurers have more information on flooding and insurance, including what you can expect after a flood at [www.abi.org.uk](http://www.abi.org.uk)

If you are made homeless because of flooding to your property and you are a tenant, you should ask your landlord if they can provide you with alternative accommodation until you can move back into your own home. If this is not possible, or if you are a homeowner, you may be able to make an application to Wiltshire Council housing department as a homeless person.

### **Loss of electricity**

In the event of a full or partial loss of the electricity supply in your property or in the Village or surrounding areas, someone should ring Scottish and Southern Electricity. Their Emergency Service Centre (ESC) staff are available round the clock and can be contacted on **0800 072728**. It would be wise to have a stock of torches with batteries or candles to hand in case of a prolonged power failure.

### **Loss of main drainage**

**Main sewers.** Contact the Wessex Water emergency number 0345 600 4 600

**Septic tanks.** Temporarily block the outflow, if possible, to the soakaway and use the tank as a cesspit. Arrange for the tank to be emptied as soon as possible,

**Cesspit.** If the cesspit fails due to rising water, arrange for it to be emptied. If it fills again it will be with groundwater and floodwater resulting in minimum pollution. Arrange for the pit to be emptied as soon as possible.

**External water leak.** If you find a water leak outside your home contact the Wessex Water emergency number 0345 600 4 600

### **Community Resources**

#### **Air Ambulance landing sites**

The Air Ambulance will land as close as possible to the scene if called out. Larger designated landing areas are the Atworth Recreation Ground at map reference ST 865658

#### **Medical/First Aid**

In the event of injury or illness within the community the assistance of professional medical support should be sought in the first instance by calling 111. 111 is the NHS non-emergency number. It's fast, easy and free. Call 111 and speak to a highly trained adviser, supported by healthcare professionals. They will ask you a series of questions to assess your symptoms and immediately direct you to the best medical care for you.

NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**The Community Responders** will be alerted by the Ambulance Service to provide rapid response.



## **EMERGENCY ACTION CHECK LIST**

### **Activation and call out**

- Dial 999 if life or property are threatened in the community by incident or emergency
- Contact the Clerk to the Parish Council/any Councillor
- Contact other members of the community that need to be alerted eg
  - Those under threat
  - Volunteers and key holders that may be needed

Contact initially may be to inform them of the emergency or inform them of the current Emergency Service advice regarding any action to be taken

## **ESSENTIAL SERVICES**

Police Non-emergency Nearest Station:	101 0845 408 7000	
Emergency Fire, Police, Ambulance	999	
BT Open Reach	0800 023 2023	
Network Rail	08457 11 4141	
Gas Emergency (National Gas Emergency Service - All providers)	0800 111 999 (24 hours)	
Electricity Emergency (SN12 – All providers) Network Operator is SSE Power Distribution	0800 072 72 82 (24 hours)	
Wessex Water <a href="http://www.wessexwater.co.uk">www.wessexwater.co.uk</a>	Emergencies 0345 600 4 600	
	Sewage Floodline 0845 850 5959	
	Burst Water Main 0800 692 0692	
Environment Agency Floodline (to register for alerts and to hear alerts and river information)	0345 988 1188	
Environment Agency Incident Line (to report flooding or river obstructions or other EA incidents)	0800 807 060	
Wiltshire Council Highways (to report flooding)	0300 456 0105 <a href="mailto:localhighways@wiltshire.gov.uk">localhighways@wiltshire.gov.uk</a>	

Wiltshire Council Emergency Planning	01225 713159 <a href="mailto:emergencyplanning@wiltshire.gov.uk">emergencyplanning@wiltshire.gov.uk</a>	
Met Office – Severe weather warnings	<a href="http://www.metoffice.gov.uk">www.metoffice.gov.uk</a>	

### MEDICAL SERVICES

Ambulance	999		24 hour
Non-emergencies – NHS Direct	111		24 hour
Wiltshire Primary Care Trust	111		
British Red Cross	01380 730131		
Chippenham Hospital (Minor Injuries)	01249 456403		7 days, 07.00 to 11pm

Doctor's Surgeries				
Spa Medical Centre	01225 703236 or 709311	Snowberry Lane Melksham. SN12 6UN	MELKSHAM	
Giffords Surgery	01225 703370 or 706613	Spa Road Melksham. SN12 7EA	MELKSHAM	
St. Damians Surgery	01225 898490	Melksham Hospital Spa Road Melksham. SN12 7NZ	MELKSHAM	

Pharmacies				
Boots	01225 703139	19, High Street Melksham. SN12 6JY	MELKSHAM	Mon-Sat 9.00-17.30 Shut 13.00 -14.00
Gompels	01225 702198	1, Bank Street Melksham. SN12 6LE	MELKSHAM	Mon-Fri 9.00-17.30 Sat 9.00-16.00
Gompels Spa	01225 703183	Snowberry Lane Melksham. SN12 6UN	MELKSHAM	Mon-Fri 9.00 – 18.30
Lloyds (Giffords Surgery)	01225 703140	56, Spa Road Melksham. SN12 7NR	MELKSHAM	Mon-Fri 8.30-18.30 Sat 9.00-12.00
Asda	01225 491400	Bradford Road Melksham. SN12 8LQ	MELKSHAM	Mon 8.00-23.00

				Tues-Fri 7.00-23.00 Sat 7.00-22.00 Sun 10.00-16.00
Sainsburys	01225 705410	Bath Road Melksham. SN12 6LL	MELKSHAM	Mon-Fri 7.00-23.00 Sat 7.00-22.00 Sun 10.00-16.00

<b>Veterinary Surgeries</b>				
Beeches	01225 7933354	Semington Road, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 6BZ	MELKSHAM	
The Chapel Surgery	01225 702427	Forest Road Melksham. SN12 7AA	MELKSHAM	
Hale Veterinary Group	01225 709701	33, Union Street Melksham. SN12 7PR	MELKSHAM	

### Backups

<b>Backup supplies</b>				
Backup Community resilience & Flood Supplies	CAWS			Coordinated by CAWS & stored at Pococks Poultry

### LOCAL SKILLS AND RESOURCES

There are people in the community who are happy to be contacted in case of emergency

<b>Skill / Resource</b>	<b>Who?</b>	<b>Contact details</b>	<b>Location</b>
Community volunteers  (none recorded)	<i>Area</i>		
	<i>Area</i>		

4x4 Owners / Drivers	Wessex 4x4 UK response	<a href="http://www.wessex4x4response.org.uk">www.wessex4x4response.org.uk</a> 07092 870604	
Suppliers of sand and sandbags	Pococks in Middle Lane Whitley		
	Atworth Flood Container		
Dehumidifiers	Rental on demand from Hire Base	31 Lysander Rd, Bowerhill 01225 792280 Buildbase	
Plant & Generator Hire	Rental on demand from Hire Base	Bowerhill 01225 792280	
Boat Owners	██████████	██████████	
Tractor and farm equipment Owners	██████████	████████████████████	
Accommodation			
White Hart	01225 702274		██████████
Churchfields School	01225 703026		██████████
Village hall	██████████		██████████
St Michaels	██████████		██████████
Independent Church	██████████		██████████
Church Hall	██████████		██████████

## Flood Warden Guide

This Guide has been put together principally from information provided by the Environment Agency and Wiltshire Council.

### Flood Warden Role Summary

	Community Volunteers DO	Community Volunteers DO NOT
<b>BEFORE A FLOOD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand flood risk within their local area</li> <li>• Identify properties at risk of flooding</li> <li>• Identify vulnerable individuals</li> <li>• Support community plan training and activities</li> <li>• Help raise flood awareness</li> <li>• Assist with the recruitment of Flood Wardens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DO NOT have property liable to flooding themselves</li> <li>• DO NOT attempt to enter or clear watercourses or culverts</li> </ul>
<b>DURING A FLOOD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise their own safety at all times</li> <li>• Follow procedures set out in their Flood Plan</li> <li>• Relay information to the local community</li> <li>• Assist with the distribution of sand bags / gel sacs</li> <li>• Follow guidance from the emergency services at all times</li> <li>• Provide the emergency services with local knowledge and information</li> <li>• Collect information about the flood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DO NOT help residents move their belongings</li> <li>• DO NOT attempt to deal with argumentative or aggressive people themselves</li> <li>• DO NOT place themselves at risk at any time</li> <li>• DO NOT enter flood water at any time</li> <li>• DO NOT attempt to operate or repair flood defence structures or equipment that they have not been trained or authorised to use</li> </ul>
<b>AFTER A FLOOD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit information they have collected about the flood</li> <li>• Help to relay information to the local community</li> <li>• Support their community</li> </ul>	

## **Flood Warden Role Profile**

The information contained within this general role profile or job description is intended to clarify (Name) Community Volunteer actions before, during and after a flood event. Importantly, this profile also outlines the limits of your role and responsibilities. Remember, your overall role is to support the community and not to carry out the job of the Emergency Services.

In undertaking any activities not described in this role profile you may not be covered by any insurance policy provided for you and your group.

### **Your role BEFORE a flood**

#### **Understand flood risk within your local area**

The risk of flooding that your community faces changes over time. New buildings, roads and even farming and land use practices can affect flood risk. Watercourses, culverts and drains can be affected by debris that could restrict their flow. Keep aware of how changes within your local environment may impact on the risk of flooding.

You can play an important role by acting as the "eyes and ears" of the local authorities. Report any debris in watercourses or culverts to your group co-ordinator and/or the local flood risk authorities in accordance with procedures in your community plan.

#### **Identify properties at risk of flooding**

Some properties are at greater risk of flooding than others. Knowing which properties are more likely to flood and possible flow routes of flood water can help you to become better prepared for an emergency. To help, take a look at a flood risk map of your local area. Consider which properties have flooded in the past. Also, look for properties in low lying areas or close to watercourses.

#### **Identify vulnerable individuals**

Your strength as a community volunteer is your detailed knowledge of your local area and the people living within it. Build up an understanding of who lives in your area and especially anyone who may require priority attention during a flood such as the elderly or less mobile.

Once you have identified vulnerable individuals within your community keep this information safe and secure. Your Parish Council may manage a list but you are advised to remember the information without writing it down.

#### **Support community plan training and activities**

You are encouraged to take part in any training for Community Volunteers. This is to provide you with information to help you to carry out your role in a safe and responsible way. The training will be updated and repeated on a regular basis.

The flood plan forms the basis of your community's response to flood risk. You should familiarise yourself with the contents of the plan and how to respond during a flood. You should always follow the guidance and advice set out in the plan as well as any training you have received to ensure you do not place yourself or others at unnecessary risk. If procedures within your Flood Plan contradict any activities described in this role profile highlight them to your Chairman who will be able to clarify the situation.

Your volunteers might meet on a regular basis to discuss issues related to flooding in the local community. You are encouraged to attend these meetings, where possible, to keep up to date with developments and issues.

### **Help raise flood awareness**

Helping to raise flood awareness within the community is an important activity within a community plan. Households and businesses may benefit from useful information such as; how to prepare for flooding, steps to protect property and emergency contacts. You may be asked to help with the door-to-door distribution of leaflets and newsletters, for example.

### **Assist with the recruitment of Community Volunteers**

As a member of the community you may be ideally placed to identify other people with the enthusiasm, skills and attitude to support the community during a flood. If you know of anyone suitable to be a warden refer them to your Flood Co-ordinator.

### **DO NOT have property liable to flooding yourself**

In the event of a flood you need to be fully available to fulfil your responsibilities as a Flood Warden. This is not compatible with having a property that itself is liable to flooding.

### **DO NOT attempt to enter or clear watercourses or culverts**

Report any debris in watercourses or culverts to your Flood Co-ordinator and/or the local flood risk authorities in accordance with your Flood Plan. Do not place yourself at risk of injury or harm by attempting to enter or unblock watercourses or culverts yourself.

## Your role DURING a flood

### **Prioritise your own safety at all times**

Your priority at all times is to ensure your own safety and not to place yourself at unnecessary risk of injury or harm.

### **Follow procedures set out in your community plan**

The procedures set out in your community plan are there to ensure a co-ordinated response from the community in the event of a flood. They are also there to promote your wellbeing and that of others.

### **Relay information to the local community**

The Emergency Services, local authorities or the Environment Agency may call upon your assistance to relay information to the community. This may be to warn the public of a potential flood and particular areas to avoid or to provide information to promote health and wellbeing. This would involve door-to-door visits to engage with individual properties.

### **Assist with the distribution of sand bags / gel sacs**

Many community plans provide support through the distribution of sand bags or gel sacs. When filling, distributing or installing these, always follow the advice and guidance set out in your training over correct procedures and manual handling.

### **Follow guidance from the emergency services at all times**

The Emergency Services and the Police in particular take the lead during a flood event. Follow their advice at all times as you may be placing yourself and others at risk of harm if you do not. Remember, you are not a member of the uniformed emergency services. If you are told to evacuate from an area follow the guidance you are given.

### **Provide the emergency services with local knowledge and information**

Your strength as a local Community volunteer is your detailed knowledge of your local area and the people

living within it. Relay this information to the Emergency Services during a flood. Be mindful the information may relate to individual properties or persons and should be managed responsibly at all times.

### **Collect information about the flood**

Information you collect and record during a flood can be important to the Environment Agency and other authorities when analysing the cause and how to reduce risk in the future. Notes and especially photographs on flow routes and water levels can be very useful.

### **DO NOT help residents move their belongings**

While attending to your responsibilities as a Flood Warden people might expect you to help move property with them. Make it clear to people that this is not your responsibility and you have other duties to attend to. A warden is there to provide advice and co-ordinate the response effort, not to get physically involved.

### **DO NOT try to deal with argumentative or aggressive people yourself**

When under stress, such as that from flooding, people can become irrational and aggressive. Always approach people in a civil, polite manner, clearly explaining what role you hold and how/if you can help. If they become aggressive in anyway, leave them alone and do not attempt to help unless approached and asked specifically.

### **DO NOT place yourself at risk at any time**

Your safety is a priority. Follow the guidance set out in your training and do not undertake activities that may place yourself at unnecessary risk.

### **DO NOT enter flood water at any time**

Flood water poses many different risks and dangers including; trips, slips, contamination, drowning and injury from submerged hazards. Do not enter flood waters.

### **DO NOT attempt to operate or repair flood defence structures or equipment that you have not been trained or authorised to use.**

The unauthorised use of flood defence equipment could increase the risk of flooding or hide problems that should be addressed by the relevant authority. Similarly, do not use any equipment you have not been trained or authorised to use.

## Your role AFTER a flood

### **Submit information you collected about the flood**

Information you collect and record during a flood can be important to the Environment Agency and other authorities when analysing the cause of the flooding and how to reduce risk in the future. Submit your information to your Flood Co-ordinator/Chairman

### **Help to relay information to the local community**

You may be able to support your community by relaying useful information after a flood. Newsletters and door-to-door visits can help keep people informed after an emergency. Information may relate to personal safety, hygiene, insurance claims or the risk of further flooding.

### **Support your community**

It can take many months for individuals, households and businesses to recover from flooding and return to normal daily life. This recovery process can be stressful and impact upon people in different ways. As a member of the community you may be able to provide support to those affected.



## Safety Information

**This section of the community volunteer guide is intended to highlight the possible hazards and dangers that you could encounter while performing your duties. Below is a list of hazards, with an explanation of what they are and how they can be avoided.**

### Drowning

Common perception is that drowning occurs in deep water such as a main river, when in actual fact a person could easily drown in just an inch of water. It is also worth bearing in mind that 15cm (6in) of flowing water is all it takes to sweep an adult off their feet. This is particularly relevant when entering flooded fields near to a river where the water could still be flowing. The Environment Agency advises all Flood Wardens against the practice of entering floodwaters of any description. You should only carry out your duties if you can do so without the need to get wet.

### Contamination

**Disposal of contaminated equipment** - After a flood there is a high probability that equipment used, such as sandbags, will be contaminated with sewage and pollutants. Disposal of these items needs careful consideration. If you think that the items used have been contaminated then you are advised to contact the local council for information and disposal. The EA booklet 'After a flood' also contains useful advice.

**Leptospirosis** - Two types of leptospirosis infection can affect people in the UK. Weil's disease is a serious and sometimes fatal infection that is transmitted to humans by contact with urine from infected rats. The Hardjo form of leptospirosis is transmitted from cattle to humans.

The main people at risk are Wardens who are exposed to rats, rat or cattle urine or to fetal fluids from cattle. Wardens in contact with canal and river water are at possible risk and farmers are now the main group at risk for both types of the disease. Other people who have contracted leptospirosis in recent years include vets, butchers, abattoir and sewer workers.

Getting rid of rats and not touching them with unprotected hands can prevent infection. It is important to cover all cuts and broken skin with waterproof plasters before and during you duties. Wash your hands after handling any animal or coming into contact with river water and always before eating, drinking or smoking. Leptospirosis is much less severe if treated promptly.

### Hypothermia

Hypothermia is caused by getting too cold. It is a condition in which your normal body temperature of 37°C (98.6°F) drops below 35°C (95°F). This is most common in cold environments, and the risk is increased if you are not wearing enough layers to keep warm, or do not have your head covered (the largest proportion of body heat is lost through the head). Hypothermia is also possible in mild weather. For example, if you get soaked in a rain shower and do not dry off properly soon afterwards, particularly if there is also a cool wind. The water evaporating from your skin brings down your body temperature.

If the weather is cold, make sure you're dressed appropriately before you go outside. Layers of clothing trap air, which helps to keep you warm tightly woven, waterproof clothes are best. Drink plenty of fluids and hot drinks (not alcohol) and eat regular, balanced meals to give you energy.

As a community volunteer you should return home immediately, and cease your duties, if you start to show signs of hypothermia. Please remember to listen to the advice of other residents and volunteers, as they may see you showing signs of hypothermia before you realise the onset of it.

## Hostile situations

When under stress, such as that from flooding, people can become irrational and aggressive. Always approach people in a civil, polite manner, clearly explaining your role and how you can help. If they become aggressive in anyway, leave them alone and do not attempt to help unless approached and asked specifically. If they require emergency assistance contact the emergency services.

## Manual handling

While attending to your responsibilities as a community volunteer people might expect you to help move property with them. Make it clear to people you must attend to your main responsibilities first. You need to remember that you are primarily there to provide advice and co-ordinate the response effort, not to get physically involved. As part of your plan it is a good idea to identify a group of willing volunteers who are trained and familiar with manual lifting techniques.

## Other hazards

**Slips, trips and falls** - Try not to walk on uneven or slippery ground and always wear sturdy, appropriate footwear.

**Livestock** - Are unpredictable in behaviour and can be very dangerous, especially if under stress. Only approach livestock with a trained person (i.e. a farmer), and again, only if you feel it is safe to do so.

**Traffic** - During flooding people will want to remove people and property away from the affected area as quickly as possible, and will not always be concentrating on their driving and the road ahead. Poor driving conditions and decreased visibility in bad weather will often exacerbate this problem. Also watch out for vehicles being driven excessively fast through floodwaters. You should always wear a high visibility jacket and take extra care when crossing roads and thoroughfares. Watch out for manhole covers that have been 'blown' off, a stout stick can be used as an aid to balance and to probe shallow water.

Roads might become severely flooded and will need to be closed to through traffic. This usually falls under the responsibility of the police, district council or the Highways Agency. But often a community volunteer can place a 'Flood' sign close to the road more easily and quickly. Check with your coordinator regarding this.

## Community Volunteers Legal Responsibilities and Advice

**As a community emergency volunteer you do not receive payment. The contract, if any, is solely between the Parish Council and the community volunteer. There is no employment contract between a community volunteer and the Environment Agency or Wiltshire council. The community volunteer is advised how to carry out their duties by the town council.**

If damage is caused by a Community warden, who is liable?

As you will be acting as agents of the Parish Council, it is implied that the Parish Council indemnifies you against liability arising from your actions unless you act negligently. All Community Wardens should check the parish insurance policy to ensure they are covered against liability for their actions.

It should be stressed that in an emergency situation it is likely that a Community Warden will be under considerable pressure. By taking reasonable care, and following the agreed actions laid out in the Flood Plan and associated documents, the Warden should be protected against civil claims. The best endeavours principle would normally apply. Only where negligence is shown to be malicious could a Warden be found to be at fault. The standard parish council insurance coverage is usually valid against this sort of claim. It is probably worth checking - if only for your own peace of mind.

What if a Flood Warden is injured?

As mentioned it is important to check whether you are indemnified against personal injury within the parish council insurance policy. The Environment Agency or Wiltshire Council will not be liable for community warden injuries unless the injury arose due to our negligence. The parish council will never ask or expect a community warden to carry out any duties that would place them in danger.

What if a Community Warden fails to give a warning?

It is important to remember that the Environment Agency has a power, rather than a duty, to give flood warnings, and the same principle also applies to a Community Warden. In English law, a failure to act does not normally attract liability. Therefore, as the law stands, it is unlikely that you would be liable for any damage that arose from the Warden failing to warn a member of the public of an impending flood. This would not be the case though if it could be proved that the Community Warden purposefully withheld information from the public in the event of a flood, and as a direct result, an individual incurred additional damage caused by the flood.

It should be noted that the legal distinction between failing to act and acting has never been part of European law. The coming into force of the Human Rights Act 1998 does make it more likely that the courts will seek to blur this distinction in English law. As of yet, no court cases have been brought against Community Wardens in order to test this theory.

Please be assured that it is highly unlikely that any court will prosecute a Community Warden as a consequence of their actions as long as the Warden acted in good faith and with good intentions.

## **Roles And Responsibilities of Authorities**

The level of service offered by local authorities varies from district to district. Local authorities do not have a statutory duty to provide sandbags or give other assistance at times of flooding. But they will usually endeavour to help, particularly in cases of emergency. Most local authorities take the threat seriously and will put aside adequate resources to help combat the risk of flooding. However resources are limited and the view of most authorities on residential flooding is that householders should take measures to protect their own properties from flooding .

Areas within the Parish council are known to have flood risk, the parish council holds a limited supply of sand and empty sandbags for distribution at times of emergency. They are used to divert water flows and protect property. This may be organised by the flood warden will coordinate this with representatives of the parish council when a flood warning has been received.

### **Roadside ditches**

The maintenance of these is normally the responsibility of the adjoining landowner (riparian owner) and not the highway authority. If road flooding occurs as a result of blockages in these ditches the highway authority may use its legal powers to require the riparian owner to clear the ditch. The parish council hold a small supply of leaflets "Living on the Edge" which describes those responsibilities and can be obtained from:-

### **Land drainage**

Local councils are the local land drainage authority for non-main rivers, but the maintenance of most watercourses is the responsibility of private owners (riparian owners) or of the local water supplier. The council has no responsibility for the maintenance of watercourses and land drainage (except on council-owned land). However, they may be able to offer general advice. The Environment Agency may undertake maintenance of some main river sections, however the responsibility is still with the riparian owner.

### **Other**

Public surface water sewers - these are drainage systems, usually piped, which are maintained by the water supplier. However, it is possible that the water supplier and waste disposal authorities are different organisations.

Highway drains - culverts under public roads, piped roadside ditches or other drainage that has been specifically built to-drain the highway. The highway authority maintains these.

### **Authorities involved**

The following organisations may be involved in direct specific action during a flooding event. Property owners are listed as it is their responsibility to protect their own property from flooding

#### **Environment Agency**

- Maintain flood defences
- Issuing flood warnings
- Receiving and recording details of all flooding incidents
- Monitoring the situation and advising other organisations
- Dealing with emergency repairs and blockages on main rivers and own structures.
- Information about what to do before, during and after a flood.

#### **Wiltshire Council**

- Co-ordinating emergency arrangements

- Maintaining safe conditions on the roads
- Putting flood warning signs on the roads
- Organising road closures and traffic diversions
- Clearing blockages on highway drainage systems
- Protect property from flooding by water from the highway (optional)
- Emergency assistance - providing sandbags (optional)
- Clearing blocked watercourses etc. (Land Drainage Act powers)
- Environmental health issues - pollution

#### **Town/Parish Council**

- Preparation of Flood Plan and organisation of Community Emergency Volunteers/flood wardens.
- Flood warning dissemination (by local agreement with Environment Agency)
- Provision of gel sacs/sandbags and other emergency equipment if available.

#### **Fire and rescue service**

- Rescue
- Responding to all emergency incidents as required
- Assisting the populace where a need is identified and the use of fire service personnel and equipment is relevant.

#### **Water company**

- Emergency overpumping or tankering at pumping stations
- Clearing blockages in public sewers and outfall grills
- Repairing burst sewage and water pumping mains.

#### **Property owners**

The principal actions of owners of property at risk of flooding or which is flooded are:

- Moving to a safe area if life is at risk
- Preventing water from entering property if possible
- Switching off electricity and gas supplies at mains
- Moving valuable possessions above floor areas liable to be flooded.

#### **National Flood Forum**

- Advice and information about what to do before during and after a flood
- Advice about insurance and flooding
- Information and about products and companies that provide resistance and resilience measures to protect property. Resistance means trying to stop the water coming in and resilience accepting that you can't stop the water coming into your property so you make your property more resilient to flood damage.

## Local Flood Risk Assessment

Risks	Impact on community	What can be done to prepare?
Flooding affecting (list areas and what might happen if this area were flooded)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road closed due to flooding requires long detour.</li> <li>• Properties flooded internally residents having to move out.</li> <li>• Families unable to get to work/school/appointments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage residents to sign up to Environment Agency Flood Alert Scheme 0345 988 1188, including those that park their cars in risk areas.</li> <li>• Hold periodic meetings of Flood Warden/committee for the area.</li> <li>• Report any local flooding to Wiltshire Council Highways 0300 456 0105 (24 hours)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out what flood defences exist or are planned in the area.</li> <li>• Encourage residents/business at risk of flooding to install resistance and/or resilience measures.</li> <li>• Educate children not to play in flood water.</li> <li>• Identify vulnerable people in the area.</li> <li>• Establish with Wiltshire Council or other parking services where cars at risk of flooding can be moved, then prepare vehicle owners to move vehicles.</li> <li>• Prepare for distribution of flood warnings and any evacuation and rest centre establishment required.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As above and additionally:</li> <li>• Organise the clearance of river and banks of obstructions if appropriate</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As above and additionally:</li> <li>• Encourage owners of property with ditches/watercourses to maintain watercourses.</li> <li>• Liaise with Wiltshire Council and Wessex Water on drainage.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 1 – Sandbag Policy

### ATWORTH SANDBAG POLICY

- Atworth Parish Council has a similar Sandbag policy to that of Wiltshire Council.
- Neither the Parish Council nor Wiltshire Council has a duty to provide Sandbags or other temporary flood defences to residential and business properties although we will try to help where we can subject to supply and demand. It should be noted it is the property owners responsibility to protect their property from flooding.
- If you know your property is at risk of flooding it is strongly recommended that you make your own arrangements for sandbags or other defences as part of a pre-emptive flood defence plan and sign up for the Environment Agencies Floodline warning system.
- What Sandbags the Parish Council has will be distributed on a 'needs' basis to properties at imminent risk of flooding or used to divert water away from them. We will not supply sandbags to defend gardens, sheds, outbuildings or other such structures. We do not accept responsibility for the placing of flood defences although we will do our best to help property owners although manpower is prioritised to the elderly and disabled
- We will not supply sandbags or other temporary defences in advance based on forecasts.
- Once issued sandbags become the property of the property owner and it is the owners responsibility to dispose of them responsibly. Wiltshire Council can provide details of disposal sites
- The Parish Council only has limited supplies of sandbags which we would prioritise to the elderly, disabled, and those with young families before offering to other householders and businesses. We will provide only 10 sandbags per property (This is generally enough for 1 doorway)
- Whilst we appreciate flooding events are stressful and traumatic the Parish Council will stop the distribution of sandbags if their volunteers are verbally or physically threatened
- Useful Links:
  - Helpful advice [www.floodforum.org.uk](http://www.floodforum.org.uk)
  - Supplier information [www.blupages.org.uk](http://www.blupages.org.uk)
  - Floodline signup [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)
  - Wiltshire Council [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/communityandliving/civilemergencies/floodinganddrainage.htm](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/communityandliving/civilemergencies/floodinganddrainage.htm)
  - Local Builder Merchants for sandbags and plastic sheeting

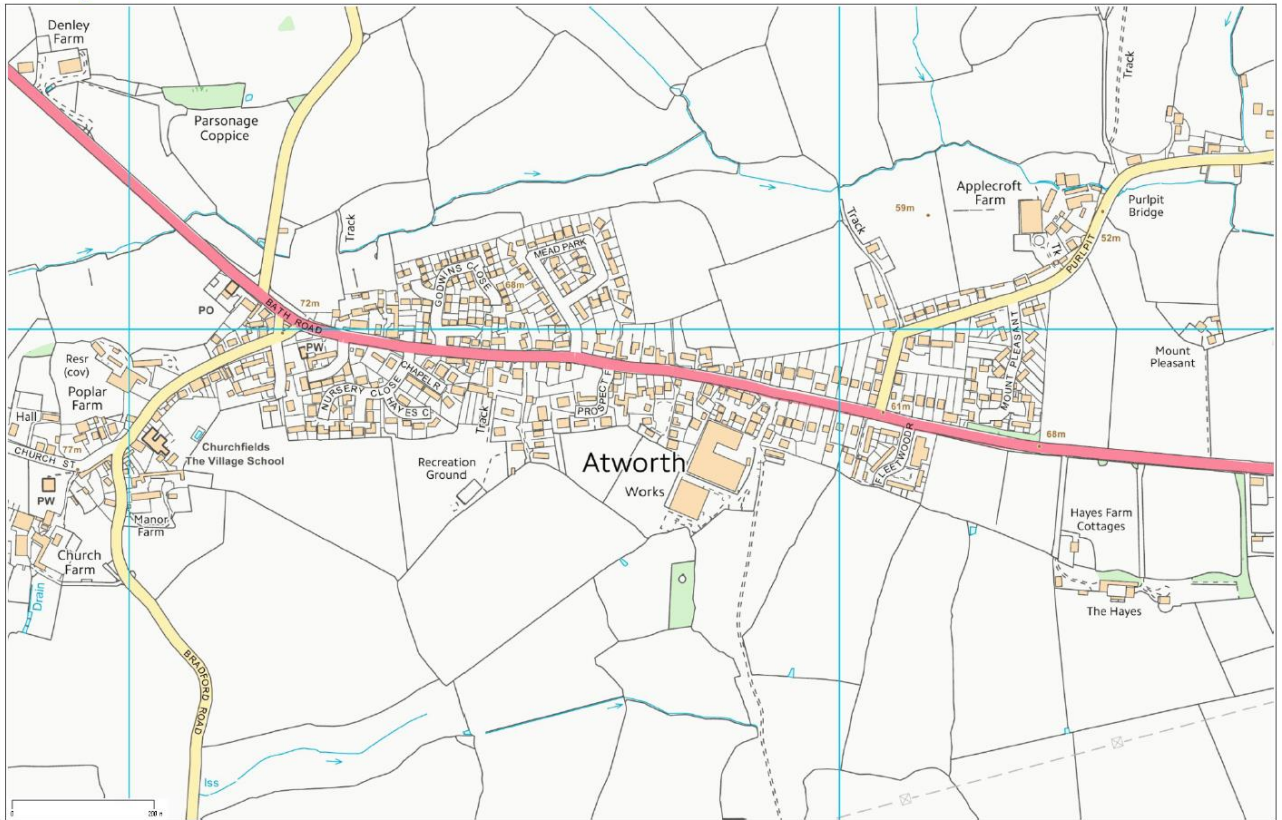
Appendix 2

Atworth Flood Plan – The map covering our area of responsibility.



flood plan

Atworth CP 



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