



MANAGING FLOOD RISKS IN PARISHES

A Best Practice Guide

Produced by The Hampshire Flood Steering Group
2nd Edition



Hampshire Association
of Parish and Town Councils



ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY

COMMUNICATIONS IN PARISH & TOWN COUNCILS

Parish & town councils are the tier of local government closest to their community. They have a sound track record of representing the interests of parishioners and providing well-supported local services. They are poised to make an effective input into Local Strategic Partnerships (community planning) and their great strength is their knowledge of the grass roots of the community.

A unique feature of parish & town councils is their Annual Assembly held between 1st March and 1st June each year to which all electors are invited. It provides an opportunity to hear about the Council's plans for the coming year, input community viewpoints, feedback and sometimes to have an outside speaker and a social focus.

Increasingly an Annual Report is produced and circulated and many councils produce a newsletter delivered to all parish households. The Quality Status initiative by Government will encourage further these types of communication in parished areas.

The Modernisation Agenda in Local Government has included widespread use of electronic mail and the development of many parish council websites. This proved advantageous in the Hampshire & Isle of Wight flooding emergency in autumn 2000 through to Spring 2001. The capacity of parish & town councils was demonstrated to engage their communities in self-help and to liaise with other local authorities and the Environment Agency. New partnerships were forged and others extended, to the great benefit of local people and to the credit of their parish councils.

Suzanne Hudson, Director, Hampshire Association of Parish & Town Councils (HAPTC)

'Vessel rescue' photograph (front cover) courtesy of Portsmouth News. 'North Wallington' photograph (page 6) courtesy of The Daily Echo

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page No.
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. BACKGROUND	2
3. OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES	3
4. FLOODING - YOU CAN'T PREVENT IT - YOU CAN PREPARE FOR IT	5
5. BEST PRACTICE	8
6. PUBLICATIONS AND WEBSITES	8

Appendix A: CASE STUDY – HAMBLETON PARISH COUNCIL MANAGEMENT OF 2000/2001 GROUNDWATER FLOOD EVENT

Appendix B: HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL TOWN/VILLAGE FLOOD PLAN TEMPLATE

Managing Flood Risks in Parishes

Environment Agency and HAPTC Guidance

1. Introduction

The aim of this booklet is to provide a guide on how parishes can best manage flood risks, based on consultation with the relevant strategic authorities and parish Best Practice during the 2000-2001 flooding. Furthermore, it looks to clarify some of the issues raised by the events, such as the various authorities' areas of responsibility. It also refers the reader to where they can obtain further, or more detailed information.

This guide has been produced by the Environment Agency and Hampshire Association of Parish and Town Councils, with assistance from Hampshire County Council. We hope you will find this document a valuable tool to assist you in managing flood risks in your Parish.

The Environment Agency, Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Association of Parish and Town Councils are looking to build on the Flood Action Conferences held following the flooding that occurred from Autumn 2000 through to Spring 2001. This 'Best Practice' Guide is part of the follow up process.

Although the work has been started within Hampshire the partners hope that it will also contribute to a broader initiative underway within the Environment Agency to improve our work with all local communities in flood risk areas. Lessons learnt in Hampshire will help inform how we develop partnerships with other organisations and communities throughout England and Wales. For more information on this work see the Agency's Floodline webpages at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/floodline



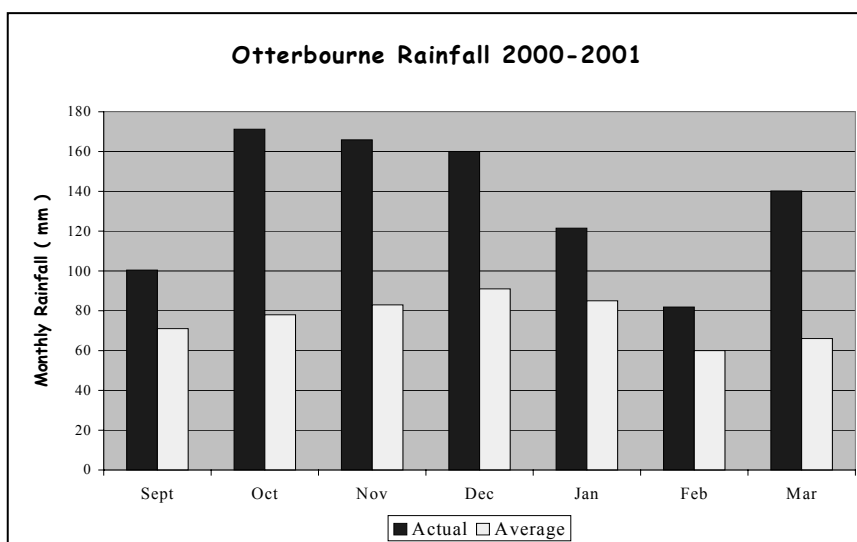
Peter Quarmby
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Hampshire and Isle of Wight Area Manager



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HAPTC Exec. Committee

2. Background

September 2000 through to March 2001 was the wettest since records began. A series of storms crossed Hampshire and the Isle of Wight over the autumn period followed by high accumulations of rainfall falling throughout the winter into early spring. As a historical comparison the autumn to spring 2000-2001 total is 10% higher than the previous highest record in 1935. Compared to the average monthly rainfall some sites experienced in excess of more than twice the average amount for two or three months in succession.



Rain gauge at Otterbourne, showing rainfall records for 2000-2001

Each of the specific rainfall events caused widespread disruption due to surface water overwhelming land and highway drainage systems and watercourses inundating flood plains. Many properties were affected and in some cases were flooded more than once. Additionally, as winter rains continued ground water levels became very high in the chalk catchments. This resulted in a number of villages being flooded directly from the rising groundwater. Heads of streams in many cases migrated up normally dry valleys to some of the highest ever-recorded locations.

Some properties experienced flooding where watercourses have never previously been found even in wetter winters, with water percolating up through ground floors or filling basements. Groundwater flooding continued into May 2001 and many villages affected have yet to fully return to normal.

More than 1000 properties in 130 different communities across Hampshire and Isle of Wight were affected by the flooding.



Flooding at Wickham from the River Meon, November 2000

3. Ownership and Responsibilities

The Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has policy responsibility for flood and coastal defence in England while operational responsibility for delivering the service falls to the ‘operating authorities’; the Environment Agency and local authorities. The Environment Agency has a general supervisory duty over all matters relating to flood defence and they also have powers for flood forecasting and flood warning arrangements.

Watercourses are divided into ‘Main River’ and ‘ordinary watercourses’ (all other watercourses). Main Rivers are generally the arterial watercourses and are designated by DEFRA. In general the powers to consent work on Main River fall to the Environment Agency and for ordinary watercourses to Local Authorities. It should be noted that a watercourse is a conduit through which water may flow and there are both Main Rivers and ordinary watercourses that are ephemeral (water only flows on occasion).

Ordinary watercourses where a lack of appropriate maintenance could cause significant risk of flooding are being agreed between the operating authorities as ‘Critical Ordinary Watercourses’ and will receive a higher standard of inspection.

Environment Agency

The Agency has powers to maintain and improve ‘Main Rivers’ and to construct and maintain Sea Defences to prevent flooding from the sea. It also has powers to regulate works by others close to Main Rivers and Sea Defences.

The Agency operates a flood warning service for river and coastal flooding, where it is technically feasible to do so, and disseminates warnings to other organisations and directly to the public.

The Agency also has two specific duties:

- 1. - exercise a general supervision over all matters relating to Flood Defence, and**
 - 2. - to carry out surveys of areas where it carries out its flood defence**
- District, Borough and Unitary Authorities**

These have similar permissive powers to the Agency to maintain and improve ordinary watercourses and in some cases powers to require Landowners to carry out maintenance works.

County and Unitary Authorities

County and Unitary Authorities have two distinct interests in Land Drainage matters – as a Drainage Authority and as Highway Authority.

County acting as Drainage Authority

The County has similar powers as district councils as a drainage body but in general may only act at the request, or in default of the District Council.

County acting as a Highway Authority

The highway authority has a responsibility to keep roads free from flooding and make provision for run-off from highways.

Water Companies (Sewerage undertaker)

The Water Companies are responsible for the foul sewerage system and the surface water sewerage system if it has been adopted. They do not have responsibilities for any other watercourses or land drainage systems.

Riparian Owners

The owner of land adjacent to a watercourse is known as a riparian owner and has rights and duties. In general he is expected to maintain the watercourse and to accept flow from his upstream neighbour and pass it on to his downstream neighbour. He is not liable to improve a natural watercourse.

Parish and Town Councils

Parish and Town Councils are not ‘drainage bodies’ under the legislation and so do not have specific land drainage powers. They do however have general powers to assist in their neighbourhood and can be of great assistance to the other authorities in providing a link to the communities.



The River Itchen at Winchester, December 2000

4. Flooding. You Can't Prevent It. You Can Prepare For It.

FLOOD WARNINGS

How are residents and businesses warned?

The Environment Agency's target is to issue river and coastal flood warnings two hours before flooding starts. Warnings are issued through a variety of means, including:

- *Direct to professional partners, parish and town councils and the public by phone, fax or pager*
- *TV*
- *Radio*
- *Floodline – telephone and advice service 0845 988 1188*
- *Environment Agency web site www.environment-agency.gov.uk*
- *Town or Parish Councils/Community Associations*
- *Volunteer flood wardens*
- *Loudhailer messages*
- *Sirens*

Whilst groundwater flooding is not covered by the formal flood warning service, the Environment Agency provides information on groundwater levels and the risk of flooding by email, through Floodline and on the Hampshire Area page of the Agency web site.

The Environment Agency do not issue flood warnings for surface water, non-main river and sewer discharge flooding. For information on events of this nature severe weather warnings and flood advice may be issued by the Met Office via local and national TV and radio.

RESPONDING TO FLOODING EMERGENCIES

Who is responsible?

The emergency response to flooding falls primarily to Local Authorities, working with the emergency services. Local authorities will co-ordinate evacuation, provide emergency accommodation and other social services. They hold supplies of sandbags for emergency use and, depending on availability, may be able to make some available to householders.

The Environment Agency's first responsibility during flooding is to ensure they take action to secure flood defences and operating sluices. They will, however, try to help with the emergency response for example by providing any spare sandbags that are not needed for their own purposes.

What can individuals do?

The Agency has held a number of flood awareness campaigns to make people aware of flood risks and what they should do if they receive a flood warning. Property owners can receive flood warnings direct to their home or work by phone, fax or pager. However people have to

request 'or opt in' to receive warnings, and despite successive flood awareness campaigns since 1996, only 1 in 4 properties at risk have registered to receive flood warnings.

The Agency actively encourages those at risk to prepare 'flood plans' for their property. Further information can be obtained via the Agency 'Floodline' telephone general information service which is available on 0845 988 1188.

What can the Parish or Town Council do?

Hampshire County Council and the Environment Agency are encouraging each Parish, Town Council or Community Association to appoint a flood co-ordinator. Parish or Town Councils and Communities should play an active role in preparing for, and responding to flooding. Key to the role would be drawing up and putting in place a Town or Village Flood Plan. Hampshire County Council Emergency Planning Unit has produced a template for the flood plan in a Word document (not a true WP template), that can be altered and changed in any way required to suit local needs. It contains advice and suggestions to assist Parishes in drawing up their own plans. A copy of this is attached as Appendix B. Electronic copies can be obtained from the County Emergency Planning Unit (Email: epoffice@hants.gov.uk). Local Plans should include details of how warnings are received in the community and how they are passed on to those at risk, liaison and contact arrangements with organisations involved during flood events, and information on where to obtain sandbags or alternatives.



Flooding occurred to 46 properties in North Wallington

WHAT IS DONE TO REDUCE THE FLOOD RISK?

Flooding is a natural phenomenon and whilst it cannot be completely eliminated it can be prepared for. The Government's policy is, however, to reduce the risk to people and the developed and natural environment from flooding. DEFRA and the operating authorities do this in three or four ways:

Effective flood warning arrangements

Flood warning is a particularly effective means of reducing the risks of flooding. It allows people to take action to reduce the worst effects of flooding, to safeguard valuable items and to move to safety if severe flooding is forecast. Flood warning systems therefore have the highest priority for public expenditure on flood defence.

Providing flood defences

New or improved flood defences can also reduce the risk of flooding. Before investing in any flood defence measures DEFRA has to be assured that they are technically, environmentally and economically sound and do not commit future generations to unsustainable levels of investment. We encourage the operating authorities to take a strategic approach to flood problems and to consider a wide range of possible approaches, and any possible impacts that works may have elsewhere.

Flood defences are generally designed to prevent flooding to a certain standard, usually expressed as the period in which a flood might be expected (say once in a 100 years – which is the same as saying there is a 1% chance of flooding happening in any one year). This standard varies according to the nature of the area defended - for example a major city will have a better standard of defence, and therefore a lower risk of flooding, than low grade agricultural land.

Discouraging inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding

Government policy is to discourage inappropriate development in the flood plain and this is reflected in standing guidance to Local Planning Authorities. DTLR have strengthened this Guidance in the form of a new Planning Policy Guidance Note – PPG 25. Flood risk is a material consideration in planning decisions and the revised guidance emphasises in particular the need to move towards a risk-based approach which takes account of the likely impacts of amongst other things climate change.

Sand-bags

The County and District Councils and the Environment Agency hold limited stocks of sandbags primarily for their own use. However, sandbags may be made available from these sources for inhabited dwellings in cases of imminent danger or severe hardship. Otherwise, sandbags are available to the public from builders merchants and the main DIY chains at a very reasonable cost (approx 43p empty and £1.60 filled as at Jan 02).

Sandbags are popular but have many disadvantages. Synthetic absorbent bags are now commercially available and are lightweight when dry, easy to store and do not need to be filled.

Flood Boards

Flood boards can be purchased or made in advance and fitted when required. A piece of 3/4 inch or 18mm ply cut to fit across outside door jambs and temporarily nailed in place, with wet newspaper or any suitable material such as old carpet underlay, sealing the gap makes an effective barrier to floodwater trying to enter through doorways. An alternative is heavy duty polythene tacked to the outside jambs and sills. Low airbricks will still need to be plugged.

Where properties suffer internally from groundwater flooding there is very little that can be done to prevent the water rising. In these circumstances it is often better to spend time moving possessions to a safe place rather than trying to flood proof your home.



Groundwater flooding in the Candover valley continued into May 2001

5. Best Practice

Management of 2000/2001 Groundwater Flood Event – Appendix A.

This case study records the role that the Hambledon Parish Council played in the management of the Hambledon 2000/2001 groundwater flood event. The key points are highlighted to assist other Parish Councils in Hampshire plan their responses when flooding occurs in the future.

Hampshire Village Flood Plan – Appendix B.

Produced by Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit to assist Town and Village councils in preparing a specific plan tailored to local needs.

6. Publications and Websites

Further and more detailed information on issues covered in this booklet can be obtained from the following sources:

Living on the Edge

This is an updated guide to the rights and responsibilities of a riverside ('riparian') owner and is available from the Environment Agency. Call 0845 933 3111 for a free copy.

Flood Directories

Directories contain practical information on the Environment Agency's flood warning code system and how to protect yourself, your family and your home in the event of flooding. They also give a list of useful telephone numbers and a map showing your local flood warning area. Call Floodline on 0845 988 1188 for a free copy.

Damage Limitation and After a Flood

Produced by the Environment Agency and CIRIA, these two publications give you details of how to make your home flood resistant and the steps to take to restore your home following a flood. Call Floodline on 0845 988 1188 for a free copy.

Preparing for Floods

Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) interim guidance for improving the flood resistance of domestic and small business properties. Copies of the report are available free from DTLR on 0870 1226 236.

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

The leading public organisation for protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales. See the latest information on flood warning and flood prevention and the Hampshire Groundwater Newsletter. Register to receive flood warnings or groundwater information by calling FLOODLINE 0845 9881188.

www.haptc.parish.hants.gov.uk

The Hampshire Association of Parish and Town Councils represents the interests of 224 Parish and Town Councils throughout the County. The Association provides a range of services including Best Practice Guides and a quarterly news and information bulletin.

www.hants.gov.uk

This site contains a wealth of information about Hampshire and the work of the County Council. In addition there is information on flooding, flood prevention and health effects of flooding.

www.floodforum.org.uk

The National Flood Forum is a non-profit making organisation dedicated to reducing the impact of flooding on people throughout the UK and linking together communities at risk from flooding.

Appendix A

CASE STUDY – HAMBLEDON PARISH COUNCIL

MANAGEMENT OF 2000/2001 GROUNDWATER FLOOD EVENT

Case Study

This short case study records the role that the Hambledon Parish Council played in the management of the Hambledon 2000/2001 groundwater flood event. The key points are highlighted to assist other Parish Councils in Hampshire plan their responses when flooding occurs in the future.

Know the Threat

Hambledon is located at the bottom of a chalk valley, along the course of an ancient river. The village has suffered frequent *groundwater* flooding since records have been kept. During the 2000/2001 winter, a 'river', with a depth up to 18 inches and a flow rate of 10 knots ran for two miles for over 2 months along the main streets of the village.



Know The Likely Flood Interval

Hambledon has had 4 serious groundwater flood events – ground floors of properties under water – in the last 40 years. The likely return period for serious flooding in the future is estimated to be 1:10 years.

Know The Responsibilities For Flood Water Management

Hambledon is not located on a 'main river' and therefore is outside the statutory responsibility area of the Environment Agency (EA) for providing flood warning and flood protection measures. Whilst groundwater flooding is not covered by the formal flood warning service, the Environment Agency provides information on groundwater levels. The Parish Council has no statutory responsibilities *per se* for water management, but as the elected representatives of the community can provide local knowledge of the state of the drainage system and exert pressure on those organisations with statutory responsibilities.

Know The Floodwater Management Plan

Following the 1994 major groundwater flood event, which was handled by the Fire & Rescue Services for many weeks, the local authorities concluded that, in any future event, the floodwater should be allowed to flow down the main roads of the village confined by sandbag walls on the pavements.

Establish A Flood Warning System

One of the important lessons learnt after the 1994 flood event was the need to establish a 'Flood Warning System' run by the Parish Council. The duties of Flood Warning System Co-ordinator appointed by the Council are: to identify a householder with a suitably located well who is prepared to take readings every day and report them (preferably by email); to establish strong links with the EA, who installed remote telemetry facilities in the Broadhalfpenny Down borehole in 1995; to compare levels and agree on the issuing of flood warning alerts; to issue various types of flood warning to the village – cellar or ground floor – for various sectors of the village using the Community Communication System.

The 'Flood Warning System' worked well in late October 2000 and hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of damage was avoided because the property in cellars and on ground floors were moved out of harms way in time.

Establish A Community Communication System

The Parish Council has established a communication system around the community. The village has been divided into manageable Sectors, with Sector Co-ordinators linked by email. It is known as the 'Community Cascade Network'. Messages are passed on by email or printed out as hard copy for circulation or distribution within each sector. For serious or difficult messages the elderly may be called upon personally by the Co-ordinator. Types of message include: flood warnings; Neighbourhood Watch crime alerts; parish business, etc.

Establish A Flood Action Co-ordinator

In October and early November 2000, the Flood Warning System Co-ordinator issued various degrees of flood warning to the community calling for the clearing of cellars and warning of the likely threat to ground floor property. Serious flooding began around the 8th November. It was immediately apparent that the Parish Council needed to establish a link to the residents and to the local authorities in order to 'manage' the increasingly worsening situation. There was a need to call for assistance (sandbags, etc) from the local authorities and to provide advice to householders (flood prevention measures, insurance, etc) being flooded.

The Flood Warning System Co-ordinator by chance had been closely involved in the 1994 flood event providing local information to the Fire & Rescue Service. He knew the importance of establishing a known 'point of contact' for all concerned and therefore transformed his function and title into 'Flood Action Co-ordinator' (FAC). The FAC tasks involved: patrolling the village to make on the spot assessments of the flood situation; reporting the situation to Winchester City Council Chief Engineer either by telephone or email at the end of the day; being available to the community with advice and supervising the placing of sandbag barriers, etc. around the most vulnerable parts of the village.

Managing The Flood

The FAC continued his involvement in the management the first flood event, which lasted from early November to the end of the month, much of the time on his own, but with assistance of Parish Councillors when able to give up their business commitments and from individuals in the village.

There was a continuing need to supervise the placing of sandbags by “Dads Army” and by the Royal Navy volunteers, who fortunately came to our rescue. Regular visits and from WCC Engineering Department greatly assisted the timely delivery of sandbags and their positioning. We were learning as we went along and the spirit of ‘self-help’ was everywhere.

However, the second flood event started in early December and was much more serious. The advice from the Station Officer, Waterloo Fire Station, was that one man could not continue to discharge the total burden of flood management and that a ‘Control Centre’ run on the line of the Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service needed to be set up in the Village Hall.

Establish A ‘Flood Information Centre’

The Parish Council set up the ‘Flood Information Centre’ (FIC) in the Village Hall with the assistance of the Fire & Rescue Service and the unstinting help from village volunteers. In all 145 volunteers made offers of help. HCC Emergency Planning provided the vital large-scale map of the village. This FIC ‘Incident Map’ showed all the flooded properties. It was used to direct the teams laying sandbag barriers and to brief visitors, such as the MP and WCC and HCC officials on the overall situation.



The FIC quickly became the focal point for those in the village with needs and problems. The installation of a telephone enabled external contact to be established between the various local authority departments (social services, public health, etc.) in WCC and HCC.

The FIC opened on the 16th December and continued in operation until the 28th December when the peak of the flooding had passed. It was manned between 9am and 5pm daily by a watchkeeping team of at least 3 or 4 people at a time. A Duty Roster was made out for the days ahead. Out of hours telephone calls were diverted to a Duty Parish Councillor’s home number.

Keep The Local Authorities Informed

At the end of each day, the Flood Action Co-ordinator compiled a ‘Situation Report’ based on briefing in the FIC and his own assessment and sent the report to WCC Chief Engineer by email. This enabled the Chief Executives to be kept informed about the situation in Hambledon and the sandbag and other needs identified for the next day. Regular review meetings were held in the village between representatives from the Parish Council, WCC, HCC, Police, Fire & Rescue and the EA, who provided forecasts and assessments of the rainfall and flooding situation. The District and

County Councillors were involved in giving assistance throughout the whole flood events and also attended these review meetings.

Keep Accurate Records

The Fire & Rescue Service stressed the importance of keeping a timed 'Incident Log' when every request and response was recorded. It is also important to keep a chronology of events and as much photographic and video material as possible. Once operational, the first FIC action was to establish the extent of property damage and human distress through the village. The Parish Council issued a 'Property Damage Questionnaire' to all householders in the Parish. This recorded that 129 out of 400 plus houses within the Parish boundaries were affected to varying degrees by floodwater.

Control The Traffic

Control of vehicle traffic through the village posed a major problem throughout the whole flood event from early November to mid January. Cars parked in the streets along the flood-line had to be removed and selective sections of road closed to traffic where the threat to properties was greatest. But the major problem was trying to control the *speed* of vehicles, especially those of the 4-wheel drive type – through the floodwater in the streets. Any speed above 10 mph caused bow waves of water to surge across the pavements and into properties on the sides of the streets.



There was such a threat to the schoolchildren being brought to the village that the Primary School was forced to close early before Christmas. Steel traffic barrier chicanes erected across the B2150 (Green Lane and Lower West Street) failed to reduce the speed of the many inconsiderate drivers. Even the regular presence of the Police failed to deter the speeding drivers. A number of police warnings were issued for 'Inconsiderate Driving'. The threat to life and property continued until the B2150 had to be closed to through-traffic and diversion signs erected to keep traffic from entering Hambledon. Only when the water levels had receded in mid January could the roads through the village be opened again to normal traffic. But closing roads has significant impact on the operations of businesses.

Keep Business Open

Throughout the weeks of the flooding every effort was made to keep the village functioning as normally as possible and all the businesses open. Walkways had to be constructed to allow

shoppers dry access to the shops. The sandbag barriers not only confined the floodwater to the roads, but also provided dry pavements for safe passage for pedestrians.



Obtain The Necessary Manpower

Despite representations to WCC, at no time was the Hambledon flood event declared to be a Civil Emergency. This would have enabled Service personnel stationed in the area to be brought in the flood-affected area to perform the many heavy-duty tasks needed. The placing of 10,000 sandbags in flood barriers along two miles of road; moving water logged carpets and furniture; digging ditches, etc. needs the lifting power of strong men. In the initial phase of the flood “Dads Army” – elderly gentlemen and some ladies - laid the sandbag barriers until “volunteers” from local service establishments came to our rescue. Serving Officers in the village saw the need for strong manpower and made the necessary links. A team of 1 plus 6 naval ratings made an enormous impact on the village morale well beyond the numbers involved.

The village was extremely fortunate that the Service volunteers were able to continue to support us during the second flood phase when a local farmer provided a “Matbro” tractor with a bucket. This vehicle was invaluable in moving sandbags, road barriers and other materials around the village.

It was also fortunate that the second flood coincided with the Christmas holiday period and enabled a group of younger residents join the work force. The manpower provided by the local authorities was much appreciated, but insufficient to cope with the urgent demands to erect flood protection barriers along either side of the main streets for the safe passage of pedestrians.

Take Care Of The Elderly

Of particular concern to the Parish Council was the welfare of the elderly and the sick. Each person at risk was allocated a nominated ‘minder’ who discretely kept the FIC unformed of any problems and needs.



Check Public Health & Security

Members of the WCC Social Department and Environmental Health Officers visited the village daily to check on the needs for re-housing and the state of the pollution caused by the main sewerage system being overwhelmed by floodwater. 'Portaloos' provided by *Southern Water* in West Street needed regular emptying. In addition, the Police checked on the security of empty properties regularly and neighbours were asked to be vigilant.

Keep The Village Informed

The Parish Council used the Community Cascade Network, noticeboards and individual house drops, to keep the village informed about any health restrictions and general advice throughout the flood event. The Hambledon website enabled those connected to the world-wide-web to keep up-to-date with background information. Regular articles in the *Hambledonian*, the Parish magazine, looked to the possible flood alleviation measures and asked for memories of previous flood events.

Look After The Media

Inevitably such property destruction and human misery attracted the attention of the media. Parish Councillors were nominated to look after the needs of the TV and Radio representatives when they visited the village.

Call Village Consultative Meetings

Two Village Consultative Meetings were held after the flooding had subsided for the whole village to attend so that they could be informed about the intentions of the local authorities in the future.

Take Tidy Up Action

Although some cellars remained flooded until May 2001, the sandbag flood protection barriers along the streets were removed in April 2000. The Parish Council assessed that the chance of repeat flooding was minimal. The 10,000 sandbags were then cleaned away by WCC Contractors and all the village streets were swept clean which brought life in the village back to some normality.

Capture The Lessons

A major flood event like the groundwater flooding of Hambledon for weeks during the winter of 2000/2001, revealed many lessons needing to be learnt and acted upon. Extensive lists have been compiled and sent to the relevant local authorities and agencies. One of the most important lessons is the central role of the Parish Council to provide the vital focus and link between the community and the local authorities. Both the Flood Action Co-ordinator and the Flood Information Centre performed this essential function. Another lesson still to be resolved is the provision of manpower at the onset of these minor civil emergencies.

Prepare A Flood Emergency Plan

The Parish Council has drawn upon its experience and involvement in the 2000/2001 flood event to produce its Flood Emergency Plan. The HCC Emergency Planning Unit template simplifies the process needed to record the actions to be taken quickly at the onset of a flood event. Important elements are the activation of the FIC and the maintenance of a list of local authority officers who can provide prompt assistance across a wide range of needs. An accurate photographic record has been kept of where the sandbag barriers were erected. The Hambledon Parish Council Flood Emergency Plan is reviewed and brought up-to-date by the Council every autumn.

Stockpile Essential Equipment

As part of the flood preparations for the winter 2001/2002, a stock of sandbags, ready for instant deployment should flooding occur, was built up in a farm building close the village. At the same time, highway warning and control notices are stockpiled in the village to enable better traffic management in the future.

Conclusion

This concludes the short case study of the Hambledon 2000/2001 groundwater flood event. Other parishes will have had very different experiences, particularly those affected by fluvial flooding, but it is hoped some of the Hambledon experience recorded above may be of assistance.

Nicholas Bailey
Hambledon Parish Councillor
Flood Action Co-ordinator

Appendix B

TEMPLATE

TOWN/VILLAGE FLOOD PLAN

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This plan is to assist Town and Village councils in preparing a specific plan for their area. The plan can therefore be tailored to meet catchment characteristics, local needs and the level of service required.
- 1.2 Details in the plan concentrate on the operational aspects of flooding, e.g. protecting life and property and managing the flood.
- 1.3 The actions of each organisation are listed but they may not necessarily be carried out as the result of a duty or responsibility.
- 1.4 Decide exactly what you want this plan to cover and outline the intentions i.e. an AIM
- 1.5 (Discuss your plan outline with the relevant agencies –District Council, Area Surveyor, Environment Agency, local landowners, Water Company etc)

2.0 FLOOD WARNINGS

- 2.1 The Environment Agency's Local Flood Warning Plan provides details of the flood warning arrangements for specific Flood Warning Areas where there is a risk of flooding from rivers or the sea. The Agency also provides information on groundwater levels.
- 2.2 There are four warning codes (represented by graphical icons). These are:-

Flood Watch	Flooding is possible . Be aware! Be prepared! Watch out!
Flood Warning	Flooding of homes, businesses and main roads is expected . Act now!
Severe Flood Warning	Severe flooding is expected . Imminent danger to life and property. Act now!
All Clear	There are no Flood Watches or Flood Warnings currently in force in the area.

- 2.3 Flood Watch is a general alert concerning flooding from rivers, streams, ditches, watercourses, estuaries and the sea. Flood Warnings and Severe Flood Warnings relate to specific Flood Warning Areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea.
- 2.4 **To receive flood warnings you must register with the Environment Agency.** List here details of how warnings are received in the village – who receives them and how they are disseminated to whoever needs them.

3.0 FLOODING EVENT

3.0 FLOODING EVENT

3.1 The main types of flooding event referred to in this plan are:-

- **TIDAL** (Sea)
- **FLUVIAL** (River)
- **FLASH** (Roads, ditches, fields)
- **GROUNDWATER** (High watertable)
- **SEWAGE** (Sewers, rising mains and pumping stations)
- **POTABLE WATER** (Mains failure)

3.2 (Highlight the type of flooding likely to effect your town/village)

4.0 LEVEL OF RESPONSE

4.1 The level of response from the authorities to a flooding incident will depend on what is flooded or is at risk of being flooded. There are five priority categories:-

PRIORITY	FLOODING AFFECTING	RESPONSE
1	People	Action to protect life
2	Houses	Action to protect life and property
3	Roads	Action to protect life and property
4	Commercial property	Possible action to protect property
5	Gardens/Agricultural land	No action

4.2 There are other factors which may influence the level of a response. Priority is likely to be given to the old or infirm when assisting people and to occupied property when protecting property. The classification of roads may be used in prioritising responses to road flooding and the protection of commercial property may depend on the risk of environmental pollution from stored chemicals etc.

4.3 Some Councils may not provide assistance in flood risk areas where there is persistent flooding and property owners and occupiers are fully aware of the situation. In such cases the owners and occupiers must be made aware that they must make their own arrangements to protect their property from flooding and this policy should be clearly stated in the Plan.

4.4 (List your local priorities for action)

5.0 AUTHORITIES INVOLVED

- 5.1 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**
- **COUNTY COUNCIL**
- **UNITARY AUTHORITY**
- **DISTRICT COUNCIL**
- **TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL**
- **FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**
- **WATER COMPANY**
- **ELECTRICITY, GAS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANIES**
- **VERY LARGE INDUSTRIAL COMPANIES**
- **PROPERTY OWNERS**

6.0 ACTION LISTS

6.1 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

The principal actions of the EA are:-

- **ISSUE FLOOD WARNINGS**
- **RECEIVE AND RECORD DETAILS OF ALL FLOODING INCIDENTS**
- **MONITOR THE SITUATION AND ADVISE OTHER ORGANISATIONS**
- **DEAL WITH EMERGENCY REPAIRS AND BLOCKAGES ON MAIN RIVERS AND OWN STRUCTURES**
- **RESPOND TO POLLUTION INCIDENTS**
- **ADVISE ON WASTE DISPOSAL ISSUES**

6.1.1 *Add specific local details of importance here.*

6.2 COUNTY COUNCIL

The principal actions of the County Council are:-

- **CO-ORDINATE EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS**
- **MAINTAIN SAFE CONDITIONS ON THE ROADS**
- **PUT FLOOD WARNING SIGNS ON THE HIGHWAY**
- **ORGANISE ROAD CLOSURES AND TRAFFIC DIVERSIONS**
- **CLEAR BLOCKAGES ON HIGHWAY DRAINAGE SYSTEMS**

- **MAY TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT PROPERTY FROM FLOODING BY WATER FROM THE HIGHWAY WHERE THERE IS A FAILURE OF THE HIGHWAY DRAINAGE SYSTEM**

6.2.1 *Add specific local details of importance here.*

6.3 **DISTRICT COUNCIL**

The principal actions of District Councils are:-

- **CO-ORDINATING ROLE FOR OWN AREA**
- **FLOOD WARNING DISSEMINATION (By local agreement with EA)**
- **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE (S138 LGA 1972) - PROVIDE SANDBAGS**
- **CLEAR BLOCKED WATERCOURSES ETC. (Land Drainage Act powers)**
- **AS COUNTY COUNCIL FOR HIGHWAYS (Highways Agency areas only)**
- **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ISSUES - POLLUTION**
- **BLOCKED ROAD CHANNELS & GULLY GRATINGS - STREET CLEANING**
- **EMERGENCY PLANNING SUPPORT GROUPS**

6.3.1 *Add specific local details of importance here.*

6.4 **TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS**

The principal actions of Town and Parish Councils are:-

- **FLOOD WARNING DISSEMINATION (By local agreement with EA)**
- **DISTRIBUTE SANDBAGS FROM DISTRICT COUNCIL STOCKPILES**

6.4.1 *Add specific local details of importance here.*

6.5 **FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

The principal actions of the Fire and Rescue Service are:-

- **RESCUE**
- **RESPOND TO ALL EMERGENCY INCIDENTS AS REQUIRED**
- **ASSIST THE POPULACE WHERE A NEED IS IDENTIFIED AND THE USE OF FIRE SERVICE PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT IS RELEVANT**

6.5.1 *Add specific local details of importance here.*

6.6 **WATER COMPANY**

The principal actions of Water Companies are:-

- **EMERGENCY OVERPUMPING OR TANKERING AT PUMPING STATIONS**
- **CLEARING BLOCKAGES IN PUBLIC SEWERS AND OUTFALL GRILLS**
- **REPAIRING BURST SEWAGE AND WATER PUMPING MAINS**
- **MAY TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT PROPERTY FROM FLOODING BY WATER FROM THE PUBLIC WATER MAINS OR DISCHARGES FROM THE PUBLIC SEWERAGE SYSTEMS**

6.6.1 *Add specific local details of importance here.*

6.7 ELECTRICITY, GAS AND TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES

The principal actions of the electricity and gas companies are:-

- **ATTEND TO EMERGENCIES RELATING TO THEIR SERVICE AT PROPERTIES PUTTING LIFE AT RISK AS A RESULT OF FLOODING**
- **ATTEND TO FLOODING EMERGENCIES AT THEIR OWN SERVICE INSTALLATIONS**

6.7.1 *Add specific local details of importance here.*

6.8 LARGE INDUSTRIAL COMPANIES

The principal actions of large industrial companies are:-

- **PROTECT OWN PREMISES AND INSTALLATIONS**
- **SOURCE OF RESOURCES WHICH COULD BE HIRED**

6.9 PROPERTY OWNERS

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

- **MOVE TO A SAFE AREA IF LIFE IS AT RISK**
- **PREVENT WATER FROM ENTERING PROPERTY IF POSSIBLE**
- **SWITCH OFF ELECTRICITY AND GAS SUPPLIES AT MAINS**
- **MOVE VALUABLE POSSESSIONS ABOVE FLOOR AREAS LIABLE TO BE FLOODED**

6.9.1 *Add specific local details of importance here.*

7.0 CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATION LINKS

7.1 CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

ORGANISATION	TEL. NO. (Office hrs)	TEL. NO. (Out of hrs)	FAX. NO.	MOBILE NO.
Environment Agency				

District Council
County Council
Fire & Rescue Service
Police
Water Company
Electricity Company
Telecommunication Companies
Gas Company
Adjacent Town/Parish Councils
Emergency Planning

Add details here

List your own town/village contact numbers here

If you have specific direct numbers for some agencies a note may be required about them from the general public or they may become overloaded when you most need them.

7.2 EMAIL ADDRESSES OR HANTSNET CONTACT NUMBERS (if applicable)

ORGANISATION	EMAIL ADDRESS OR LOGON ID
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County Council	
District Councils	<i>Add details here</i>

8.0 FLOOD RISK AREAS

- 8.1 List details of properties/areas known to be at risk from flooding (incl cause – watertable, run-off or tidal)

Add details here

9.0 SANDBAG PROVISION

- 9.1 Statement on who, in the immediate area, holds sandbag stocks and where:-
Parish
District
Commercial Stockists

10.0 LIAISON ARRANGEMENTS

- 10.1 *Details of specific arrangements between the various authorities to be included here. Arrangements must have been confirmed between authorities in writing. Reference should be made to site or location plans.*

11.0 FOLLOW UP ACTION

- 11.1 The following action is advised during and after a flooding incident:-

- **KEEP PEOPLE INFORMED OF WHAT IS GOING ON AND IMPLEMENT MEDIA PLAN WHEN APPROPRIATE**
- **PROVIDE INFORMATION TO LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY PLANNING SUPPORT GROUPS TO ENABLE THEM TO ASSIST AND ADVISE AFFECTED PROPERTY OWNERS**
- **MAINTAIN ACTION AND FINANCIAL RECORDS**
- **INVESTIGATE FLOODING AND RECORD INFORMATION INCLUDING FLOOD LEVELS**
- **SUPPLY DETAILS OF PROPERTIES FLOODED, THE EXTENT OF FLOODING AND FLOOD LEVELS TO THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**
- **INFORM RIPARIAN OWNERS OF REMEDIAL MEASURES NEEDED TO WATERCOURSES**
- **IDENTIFY SCHEMES TO ALLEVIATE SERIOUS FLOODING OF PROPERTY (If applicable)**

11.2 *Add specific information here detailing who is responsible for the follow up action.*

12.0 LOCAL CO-ORDINATION

12.1 *Details should be included here which show:-*

- **LOCATION OF LOCAL FLOOD CO-ORD CELL (eg Village Hall)**
- **MEANS OF REPORTING INCIDENTS**
- **METHOD OF PASSING INFORMATION ('phone nos, notice board etc)**
- **FLOOD RISK AREAS (INCLUDING PROPERTIES AT RISK)**
- **SANDBAG STOCKPILE LOCATIONS**
- **OVERLAP AREAS COVERED BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN TOWNS/VILLAGES**