

Your guide to flood risk in Weymouth

Melcombe Regis and
the Harbour area



Keep
me safe



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Introduction

This guide is all about flooding in the Melcombe Regis and Harbour area.



BUILDING RESILIENCE IN COMMUNITIES

It has been produced so that you can find out about flooding in the Melcombe Regis and the Harbour area, how flooding may affect you, who's who and who's doing what, and how you can do your bit and be more prepared. It's for property owners, businesses and for those who rent a property in this area.

The guide has been produced by the Dorset Coast Forum with support from Dorset Council, BCP Council, Weymouth Town Council, the Environment Agency, Wessex Water, and residents of Weymouth.



To view a digital version of this booklet scan the QR code or visit:
www.dorsetcoast.com/resources/your-guide-to-flood-risk-in-weymouth



Flooding in Weymouth



What causes flooding in Melcombe Regis and the Harbour area?

› River flooding

Generally caused by heavy rainfall causing the River Wey to fill, eventually overtopping its banks. During very high tides, Weymouth sees a phenomenon called 'tidal locking'. This is when the level of the incoming high tide actually stops the water from the river Wey flowing out to sea which in turn can increase the chance of flooding.

› Tidal flooding

Created by high tides causing high water levels in the harbour and waves overtopping the seafront caused by storm surges/large waves. In the worst case, waves could overtop the esplanade and run down the roads into Melcombe Regis.

› Surface water flooding

Caused by the run-off of heavy rainfall from houses, streets, and paved areas.

› Groundwater flooding

Caused by high water levels leading to water seeping underground and emerging on the surface, and in some cases into peoples' properties.

All these types of flooding have the potential to impact Melcombe Regis due to the area being 'basin or bowl shaped', with some parts being lower than sea level. However, the risk of flooding is increasing due to rising sea levels, greater intensity of storms, and fewer green areas for the water to drain away.

You can check the flood risk for flooding from main river, sea and surface water for your area online at www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk.



Flooding in the Swannery

Photo by Andrew Knowles

**Radipole Park Drive
flooding in 2012
caused by
the River Wey
bursting its banks**



Photo by Andrew Knowles



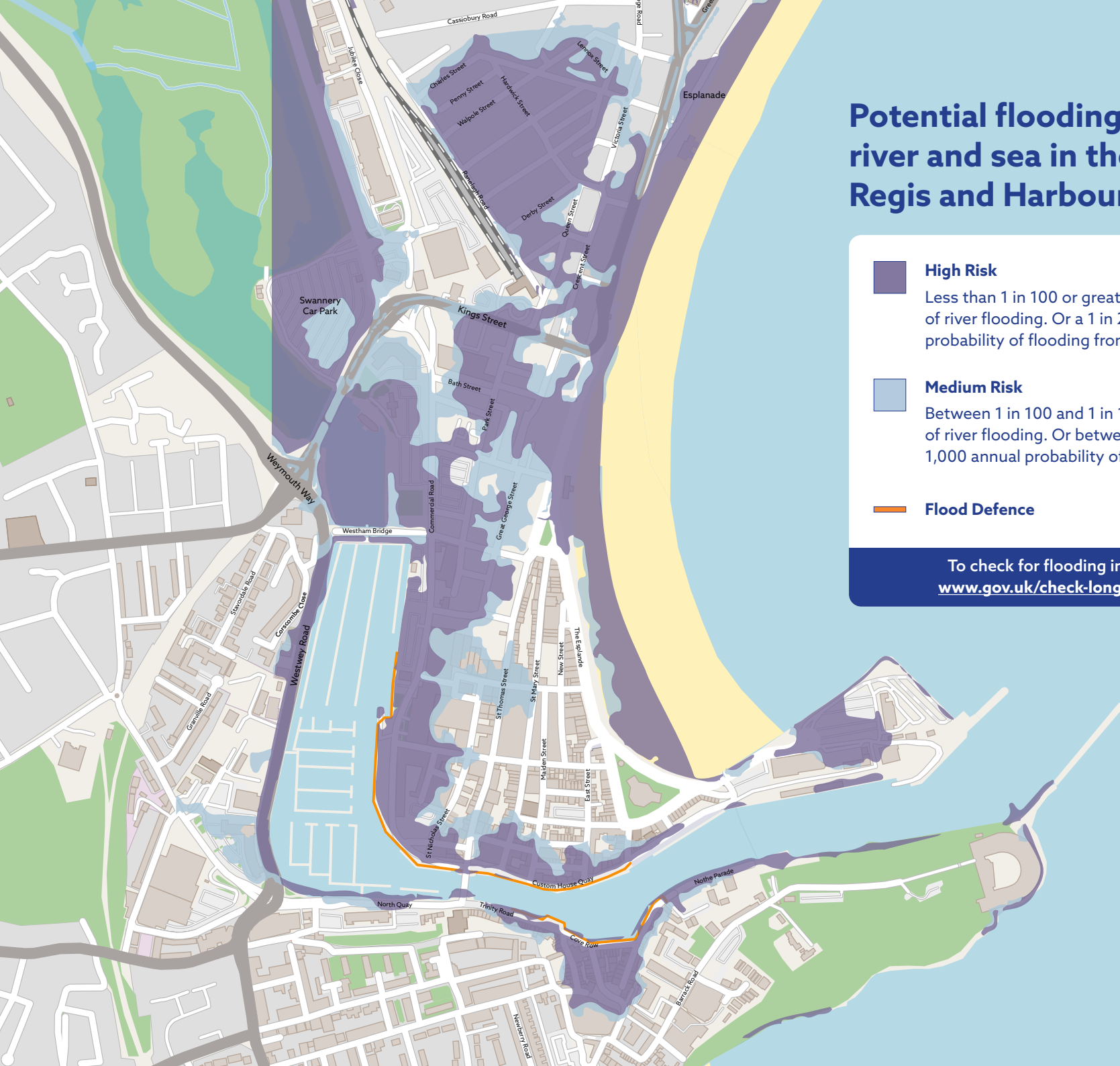
Flooding in the Harbour

Photo by Bryan Roberts

Potential flooding from the river and sea in the Melcombe Regis and Harbour area

- High Risk**
Less than 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding. Or a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of flooding from the sea.
- Medium Risk**
Between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river flooding. Or between a 1 in 200 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of sea flooding.
- Flood Defence**

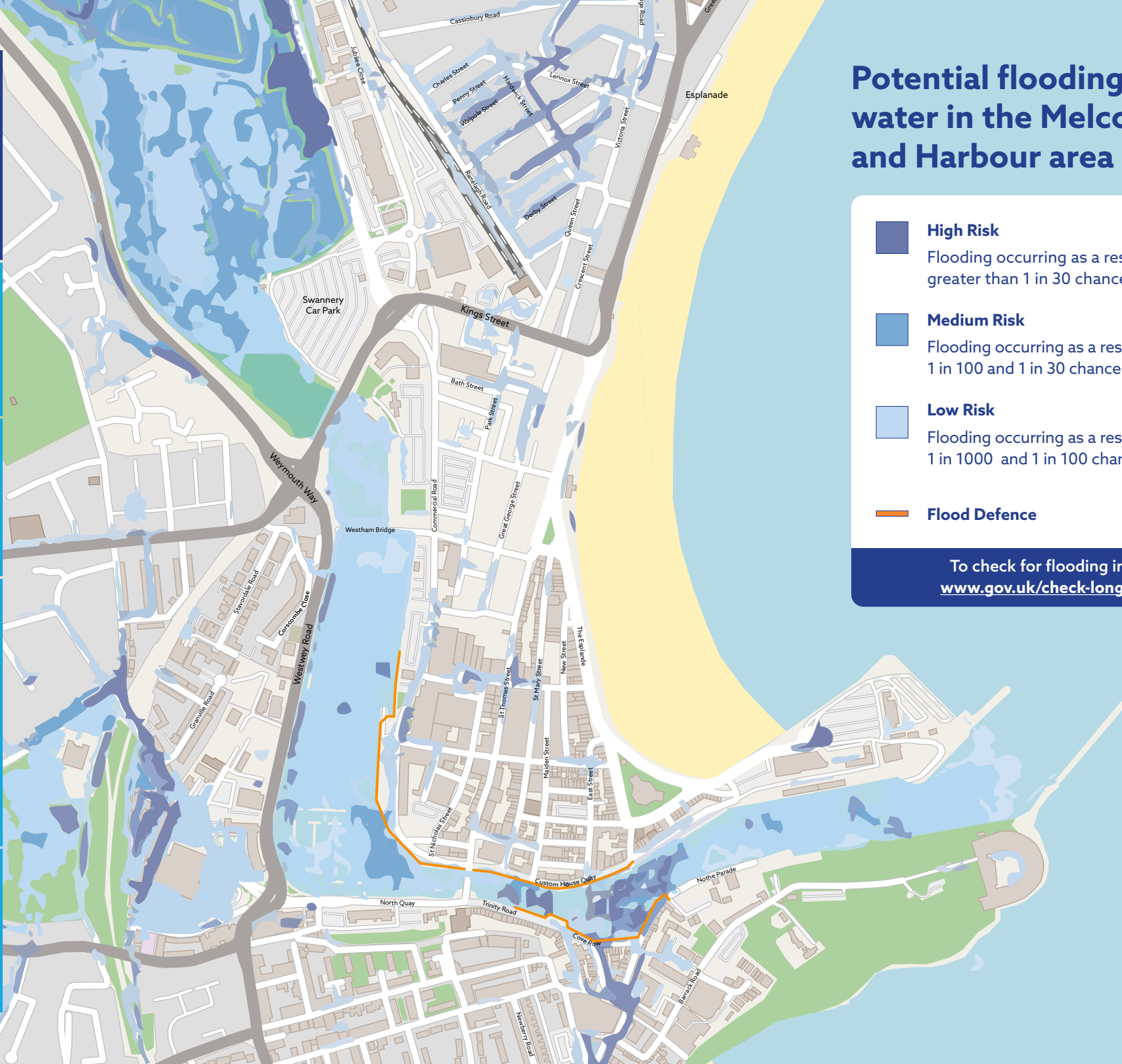
To check for flooding in your area visit www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk



Potential flooding from surface water in the Melcombe Regis and Harbour area

- High Risk**
Flooding occurring as a result of rainfall with a greater than 1 in 30 chance in any given year.
- Medium Risk**
Flooding occurring as a result of rainfall of between 1 in 100 and 1 in 30 chance in any given year.
- Low Risk**
Flooding occurring as a result of rainfall of between 1 in 1000 and 1 in 100 chance in any given year.
- Flood Defence**

To check for flooding in your area visit www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk



Who's who and who does what?

► Dorset Council – Flood Risk Management and Coastal Risk teams:

Dorset Council is the lead local flood authority and manage flood risk from local sources such as streams, brooks or tributaries (but not main rivers), surface water and groundwater (see page 4 for definitions). The council also ensures local flood events in Weymouth are investigated by the appropriate organisation. The Coastal Risk Team (CRT) is responsible for managing the flood risk and erosion along the coastline of the Dorset Council area. The team works to maintain and improve measures to help prevent flooding and coastal erosion. This includes management of the beaches and fixing or raising the harbour and esplanade 'sea' walls which all help to hold back flood water. The Coastal Risk team is currently developing a Flood and Coastal Risk Management (FCRM) Strategy for Weymouth covering the next 100 years that will see big improvements to flood defences that help to protect the town. You can contact the teams via email:

► Flood Risk Management – floodriskmanagement@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

► Coastal Risk – coastalrisk@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

► Dorset Council – Highways Team

The team clear highways drainage gullies on the roads, footways, and some alleyways where they have been 'adopted' by Dorset Council and are not privately owned. In the Park District gullies are not routinely cleared, but drainage issues may be identified as part of yearly and twice-yearly routine inspections of the roads. The team will also inspect drain gullies which are reported as blocked by members of the public on an ad-hoc basis. Finally, they respond to emergencies where highway flooding will cause damage to a person or a property, where resources allow.

► Environment Agency

The Environment Agency's principal aims are to protect and improve the environment. It has an overview of all coastal erosion and flood risk management activities, with specific responsibilities for flood risk from main rivers and the sea. The Environment Agency works closely with Dorset Council and all relevant partners to consider how best to manage flood risk in Weymouth. It also allocates funding from DEFRA to pay for the work needed to manage flood risk and coastal erosion.

► Wessex Water

Wessex Water is responsible for the sewerage network. In the Park District, the surface water which runs off the roads enters a combined sewerage system. Wessex Water takes this wastewater away for treatment and recently invested in increased resilience of the system to help prevent flooding within the Melcombe Regis area.

▶ Volunteer Flood Warden Group

The volunteer flood wardens live locally and have a good knowledge of Melcombe Regis and the Harbour area. They have knowledge on flood issues in this area and work together to support the community to increase awareness, planning and preparedness when dealing with flooding. The flood wardens act as the eyes and ears in the community. Flood wardens:

- ▶ Develop and update the community flood plan and flood warden action cards with the support of the Environment Agency and Weymouth Town Council.
- ▶ Monitor the condition of local drains, brooks and other watercourses, and report any issues to the right organisation.
- ▶ Give out relevant flood information to residents and businesses including how to plan and be prepared.
- ▶ Encourage people to sign up to the Environment Agency free flood warning service for main river flooding (River Wey).
- ▶ Act as the local point of contact during flood events for Weymouth Town Council, the emergency services and the Environment Agency regarding local conditions.
- ▶ Speak with neighbours to reinforce flood warnings when they are issued.
- ▶ Visit people who are at risk during a flood event to make sure people are aware and prepared and if necessary, get extra help to those at risk.
- ▶ Carry out local observations and actions in line with the community flood plan and flood warden action cards.
- ▶ Note and report local flood event details using the Flood Online Reporting Tool (FORT).

Anyone can become a flood warden but ideally they should be:

- ▶ Reasonably fit and able to notify neighbours.
- ▶ At home during the day or working close to home.
- ▶ A good communicator – able to explain and pass on information.
- ▶ Ideally not at high risk of flooding themselves.

If you are interested in contacting or becoming a volunteer flood warden, please get in touch via email
office@weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk
or floodwessex@environment-agency.gov.uk

How you can prepare for a flood in your area



Insurance

FLOODRE

Having the right insurance is really important.

If you own or rent your property, then look at Flood Re which is a joint initiative between the insurance industry and Government. It aims to bring more affordable insurance to those whose properties suffer from or are at risk of flooding. They do this by reimbursing insurance companies for flooding claims.

Only a landlord can insure the building itself, but they are not eligible to do so through Flood Re, as leasing a property is classed as a business and Flood Re is not available for businesses. However, if you rent your home, it's also important to get contents insurance which you may be able to do through Flood Re.

Take a look to find out how to determine whether your property qualifies: floodre.co.uk.

Sign up to get flood warnings

The flood warning service is a **FREE** service provided by the Environment Agency. It gives you advance notification if your area is at risk of flooding from main river, sea, and groundwater. It does not provide warnings for surface water flooding.

Messages can be received via landline, mobile, text and email. It takes 2 minutes to sign up online at [gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings](https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings) or call Floodline on **0345 988 11 88**.




For current **Flood Alert** and **Flood Warning** messages and information, 5 day **Flood Forecast** and river, sea, groundwater and rainfall levels visit: www.gov.uk/check-flooding



Be flood aware

Knowing what the different warnings mean makes sure you're better prepared and ready to take the appropriate action.

The table below gives you a simple way to remember what to do and when.

Logo	Meaning	Actions to take
	Flood Alert - flooding is possible and that you need to be prepared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prepare a bag that includes medicines and insurance documents ➤ Regularly check flood warnings
	Flood Warning - flooding is expected and that you should take immediate action. You should take action now and not wait for a Severe Flood Warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Follow your pre-written flood plan ➤ Turn off gas, water and electricity ➤ Move things upstairs/to higher shelves or to safety ➤ Move family, pets and car to safety
	Severe Flood Warning - there is severe flooding and danger to life. These are issued when flooding is posing significant risk to life or disruption to communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Only call 999 if in immediate danger ➤ Follow advice from emergency services ➤ Keep yourself and your family safe

Weather forecasts and severe weather warning service

Met Office provides a free local forecast including maps which also include areas of forecast rainfall and intensity. Met Office also provides a national severe weather warning service which warn of impacts caused by forecast severe weather. This is very helpful when trying to prepare for potential surface water flooding.

Warnings are designed to let you know what weather is in store and what the impacts of that weather may be. The Met Office operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year so warnings can be issued at any time, day or night. Warnings are provided up to seven days ahead for rain, thunderstorms, wind, snow, lightning, ice, extreme heat and fog and are updated if forecasts impact change. Find out more on the Met Office website: [metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/uk-warnings](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/uk-warnings).

Flood plans

A flood plan is a great way to help you act quickly and make practical decisions in the event of a flood. You can fill in the attached Personal Flood Plan with the relevant information for you. Keep this plan in your emergency grab bag for easy access and if possible, it would be a good idea to take a picture of it and keep it on your mobile phone. You can also download a copy at [gov.uk/government/publications/personal-flood-plan](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-flood-plan).

If you work at or have a business in a flood risk area, there is a business flood plan available to download and complete which also contains lots of helpful guidance and information [gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-your-business-for-flooding](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-your-business-for-flooding).

Emergency grab bag

Preparing an emergency grab bag allows you to react quickly if you had to leave your home.



This is what we think makes up a great emergency grab bag:

- › Copy of your flood plan, insurance and any other important documents.
- › Emergency contact numbers: Insurance helpline, local council, emergency services, water, electricity and gas suppliers, and landlord's details if renting.
- › Torch and batteries.
- › Mobile phone and charger.
- › Camera (if phone doesn't have one) to record damage for insurance purposes.
- › First aid kit and essential prescription medication.
- › Filled drinking water bottles and food (including energy or cereal bars).
- › Blankets.
- › A set of warm clothes, waterproof clothes, wellington boots, rubber gloves.
- › Wash kit and essential toiletries.
- › Children's / baby essentials (including baby food, baby formula, nappies etc.).
- › Bank cards and emergency cash.

Emergency grab bag

FOOD & DRINK



MEDICINE & HYGIENE



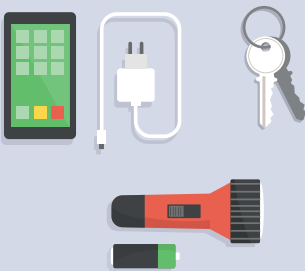
CHILDREN & BABIES



CLOTHING



TOOLS & ELECTRONICS



DOCUMENTS



Get your property flood prepared

There is a lot you can do to prepare in advance for flooding. You may not have time to buy and put measures in place once flooding is likely.

If you live in an area which is at risk of flooding, we recommend that instead of relying on sandbags or gel flood bags, you or your landlord (where applicable) carry out more permanent and effective measures to protect your property. Here are some useful things that you can do to help protect your property and your belongings.



Homeowner

If you own the property:

- › Choose rugs rather than fitted carpets so they can be easily removed in a flood.
- › Move or fit plug sockets, boilers, and service meters higher on walls.
- › Have non-return valves in drainage pipes to prevent sewage backing up.
- › Use waterproof sealant on external walls; waterproof paint on internal walls.
- › Air bricks – replace with those that automatically close when flood water rises or fit specially designed covers that can be placed over ventilation bricks.
- › Consider purpose-built flood board / gates that can be put in place on the front and back doors when flooding is imminent. It may be possible to replace your existing external door with one that is flood-proof. Door thresholds can also be raised.
- › Walls and floors – consider raising damp-proof brick courses. Sealing floors and ‘tanking’ (creating a tank-like seal to protect walls against water penetration) can prevent water rising up through the ground.
- › Choose water-resistant door and window frames (and use silicone sealant).
- › Replace mineral insulation within walls with closed cell insulation.
- › Go for solid flooring (concrete covered with treated timber or sealed tiles).
- › Have wood or plastic kitchen/bathroom units rather than MDF/chipboard.
- › Use lime or cement render – more water-resistant than normal plaster.
- › Replace carpets with floor tiles.
- › Replace ovens with raised built-under types.



Renter

If you rent:

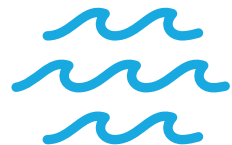
- Speak to your landlord about the things listed for homeowners.
- Store valuables and sentimental items such as family photos high off the ground or upstairs.
- Buy an inflatable toilet bung to prevent back up, or make your own version by filling a strong bag with soil or sand.
- Get a puddle-sucker pump to remove excess water.
- Air bricks - fit specially designed covers that can be placed over ventilation bricks.

For more information on flood protection products and services you can access the 'Blue Pages Directory', 'Six Steps to Property Level Flood Resilience', and the National Flood Forum: nationalfloodforum.org.uk.

If you are going to buy a flood protection product, check it meets the British Standards Institute (BSI) specification. Just look for the number 'BS 851188'.

Remember! Check with your insurer to confirm they are aware of any flood resilience improvements you have made as any work you carry out could lead to lower premiums.

In the case of an emergency, there is a limited local sandbag store in the Weymouth Town Council Queen's Street garages. For access details, contact Weymouth Town Council on **01305 239839**.



Get your property prepared

 Renters
 Homeowners



How to respond in a flood



Important! Flood water is dangerous and can contain raw sewage.

- › 15cm of fast-flowing water can knock over an adult and 30cm of water can move a car.
- › Avoid walking or driving through flood water.
- › Keep children and vulnerable people away from flood water.
- › Wash your hands thoroughly as flood water will be contaminated.

Quick actions

- › Check weather forecasts and flood warnings, and take the appropriate actions as advised.
- › Move sentimental or valuable items upstairs or high off the floor.
- › Apply property flood resilience measures.
- › Locate your flood plan and check your emergency grab bag.



Flooding at Swannery car park

Useful numbers

Organisation	Purpose	Phone number	Website
Emergency services	In case of emergency	999	N/A
Environment Agency - Floodline	To sign up to warnings or for more information	0345 988 1188	gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings
			gov.uk/check-flooding
Environment Agency - Incident Hotline	To report flooding from the main river and sea	0800 807060 (24/7)	N/A
Wessex Water	To report sewage flooding	0345 850 5 959	wessexwater.co.uk/help-and-advice/your-wastewater/flooding/sewer-flooding
National Gas Emergency Service	For any concerns over gas appliances	0800 111 999	sgn.co.uk/help-and-advice/keeping-gas-safe/gas-safety
National power outages	For any concerns over electrical hazards or power cuts	105 (24/7)	nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/contact-us/power-cuts
National Highways	To report flooding on main roads	0300 123 5000 (Office hours)	gov.uk/report-road-flooding
Dorset Council Highways	To report blocked gullies or highways emergency	01305 221020	dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/roads-highways-maintenance/maintenance/maintenance/drainage-and-manhole-covers
National Flood Forum	For support before, during or after a flood	01299 403055 (Office hours)	nationalfloodforum.org.uk
Weymouth Town Council	For sandbag information	01305 239839	weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk



Recovering from a flood event

First steps



- › Take care as there may be hidden dangers in the flood water like sharp objects, raised manhole covers and sewage pollution.
- › Flood water could have caused structural damage to your property.
- › If you rent your property, contact your landlord and your contents insurance company as soon as possible.
- › If you own your property and are insured, you need to arrange for the insurance company to send a loss adjuster to look at your property. They will confirm what repairs and replacements are needed and covered by your policy.
- › If you do not have insurance, Dorset Council may be able to provide information on hardship grants or charities that may be able to help you.

Flood water can contain sewage, chemicals, and animal waste. Always wear:

- › Waterproof outerwear, including gloves.
- › Wellington boots.
- › Face mask.

Electricity

If your electricity supply is not already switched off at the mains, get a qualified person to do this. **DO NOT** touch sources of electricity when standing in flood water.



Water

You can get water out of your property using a pump and generator. Position the generator outside in the open air as generators produce carbon monoxide fumes which can kill. Only pump out water when flood levels outside your property start to be lower than inside. This reduces the risk of structural damage.


Home and garden

You can clean and disinfect your property using ordinary household products.

A garden hose is useful for washing down. Do not use high-pressure hoses as they blast contaminated matter into the air.

If you are drying your property naturally, keep doors and windows open as much as possible. If using dehumidifiers, close external doors and windows.

If you have gas or oil central heating and it has been checked by an engineer, turn it on. Keep the thermostat between 20-22 degrees centigrade for steady drying.



Dealing with insurance companies

Ask the insurance company:

- How long it will be before the loss adjuster visits.
- If you must clean your property or if they will get a company to do it for you.

Always make your own record of flood damage:

- Use a permanent ink pen to mark on the wall the height the flood water got to. Do this in every room affected by flooding.
- Photograph or video your damaged property. List the damage to your property and belongings.
- If your insurance policy covers you for loss of perishable goods, make a list of all the foods you throw away. Include any food touched by flood water and anything in your fridge or freezer ruined by loss of power.

Things to help with your insurance claim:

- Confirm the insurance company will pay for any service or equipment you need.
- Make a note of all telephone calls. Record the date, name and what was agreed
- Keep copies of all letters and emails you send and receive.
- Keep receipts.
- Don't throw anything away until told (except ruined food).

Important note: the insurance company may only offer to clean and repair something, not replace it.

Reporting a flood

Reporting a flood helps Dorset Council investigate the flooding, identify the causes, and prevent future incidents.

Flood Online Reporting Tool



To report a flood, you can use the Flood Online Reporting Tool (FORT):

www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/emergencies-severe-weather/flooding/report-flooding

Reporting sewage flooding

If your home has become flooded by sewage, you should report this online at:

www.wessexwater.co.uk/report-a-problem

or by calling 0345 600 4 600 (24 hours).



If you move house, please leave this guide for the new resident.

For more copies of this guide, please contact Weymouth Town Council at: office@weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk



List of useful resources



- **FloodRe Insurance:** www.floodre.co.uk
- **Environment Agency Flood Warning Service:** www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings
- **Blue Pages Property Flood Protection Measures:** www.bluepages.org.uk
- **Six Steps to Property Level Flood Resilience:** hummedia.manchester.ac.uk/institutes/mui/cure/research/documents/Property_owners_booklet_web_000.pdf
- **Report a flood or blocked gullies:** www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/emergencies-severe-weather/flooding/report-flooding
- **Weather forecast and Severe Weather Warnings:** www.metoffice.gov.uk
- **Sewer flooding, Wessex Water:** www.wessexwater.co.uk/help-and-advice/your-wastewater/flooding
- **To prepare for imminent and future flooding:** www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding
- **Personal flood plan template:** www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-flood-plan
- **For current flood risk, flood warnings, river, tide, groundwater and rainfall levels and 5 day flood forecast:** www.gov.uk/check-flooding
- **Free flood warnings for rivers, sea and groundwater:** www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings

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Notes

