

FLOODING: BE PREPARED

With winter upon us please take time to read the following and ensure that you and any vulnerable neighbours are prepared in the event of flooding

- Check that road drains are clear of debris and not blocked. If safe to do so, clear surface debris yourself. Wiltshire Council will clear drains once a year but residents living near open ditches need to ensure they remain clear. Any blockages to drains on highways need to be reported direct to Wiltshire Council (www.wiltshire.gov.uk).
- If your property is bounded by or has a river, ordinary watercourse, ditch or stream flowing through your land or garden you have riparian rights and responsibilities. For those renting, check with the owner who is to manage these rights and responsibilities. As a reminder, where they relate to flooding, these responsibilities include:
 - You must maintain the bed and banks of the watercourse, and also the trees and shrubs growing on the banks.
 - You must also clear any debris, even if it did not originate from your land.
 - You must keep any structures that you own clear of debris.
 - You must keep the bed and banks clear of any matter that could cause an obstruction, either on your land or downstream if it is washed away.

Find out more from www.environment-agency.gov.uk or 03708 506506

- Find out if your home or business is at risk of flooding by visiting the Environment Agency website www.gov.uk/environment-agency or www.gov.uk/check-if-youre-at-risk-of-flooding
- Flood warning service – sign up for free flood warning and groundwater service by calling Floodline 0845 988 1188/0345 9881188 or visiting www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings. Warnings can be received by phone, text, email or pager.
- Neither Wiltshire Council nor the Parish Council has a duty to provide sand bags or other temporary flood defences to properties although help will be provided, if possible. It should be noted that **it is the property owner's 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 obtaining sand bags.**
- In the event that you need sand bags, limited supplies of both sand and bags are stored in the Village Pound, by the church in Coombe Bissett. Gel sacs are available from David Parson.
- Check pumps are working, sumps are clear, and hoses are in good condition.
- In the event of serious flooding where portable pumps are insufficient the Parish Council has a powerful pump available, supplied by SSE. If you need to use this pump please contact David Parson (718516). He also has available 2 small portable pumps for emergency use.

- However, if **you know your property is at risk of flooding it is strongly recommended that you obtain your own pumps.**
- Consider investing in flood protection for your house or business e.g. flood doors, automatic self-closing air bricks, non-return valves on pipes, air brick covers. The National Flood Forum can be contacted for advice and information about flood defence products nationalfloodforum.org.uk (01299 403055). In addition, Blue Pages (bluepages.org.uk) is a directory of flood products and services available to help reduce the risk of flooding to homes and businesses.
- The Environment Agency produces leaflets giving advice and information on what to do before, during and after a flood, riparian responsibilities, and protection against groundwater flooding. For more information, contact the Environment Agency on 03708 506506, email enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk or visit the website www.environment-agency.gov.uk