



Flood Plan for Weedon Bec

Over the Easter holiday weekend in April 1998 there was widespread flooding in many parts of Northamptonshire. The worst flooding occurred in the St James and Far Cotton areas of Northampton. There was also extensive flooding in the flood plain of the River Nene between the A45 Upton Way in Northampton stretching towards Kislingbury village.

During this period two people lost their lives, 4,200 properties being flooded, and damage caused as a result of the flooding was estimated to be in excess of £75 million. Whilst flooding is a relatively rare occurrence in the United Kingdom compared to other parts of the world it does appear as if the United Kingdom is undergoing a change in its weather pattern, and it would therefore be prudent to prepare for the unexpected. Weedon has experienced severe flooding in 1947, 1992 and 1998.

Following the last flooding incident in 1998 work was undertaken to build a dam and sluice gate further upstream, which should prevent similar incidents occurring in the future. Further information regarding the work that was undertaken to alleviate the problems of flooding in the future can be found on the following link:-

<http://www.engineeringnaturesway.co.uk/bestpractice/Weedon-dam-flood-alleviation-scheme/>

Reasons for Flooding

Flooding takes place when water covers land that is normally dry. The main source of flooding that can affect Northamptonshire is:-

- River flooding: this occurs when a water course cannot cope with the volume of water which drains into it. The water overflows its banks onto the surrounding low lying land. This area is referred to as the flood plain of the river. The excess water would cover this flood plain until the water course could handle this volume of water. Unfortunately the rivers flood plain is increasingly being used for residential and commercial development.
- Surface water: this occurs when heavy rain cannot be absorbed into the ground or enter the drainage system.
- Sewerage flooding: this occurs when sewers are overwhelmed by heavy rain, or when the sewers become blocked. Flood water becomes contaminated with raw sewerage. This has serious public health implications.
- Ground water flooding: this occurs when water levels in the ground (the water table) rises above the surface levels. This is most likely to occur in areas underlain by permeable rocks and only after seasonal heavy rain.
- Reservoir flooding: this occurs when reservoirs which are holding large volumes of water cannot contain the volume of water flowing into it and the excess water either flows over the top of the dam, or the excess water has to be released.

How flooding could affect Weedon

One of the primary functions of the Environment Agency is to play a lead role in managing flood risk and to minimise the effects of flooding. The River Nene Catchment Flood Management Plan is one of 77 plans for England and Wales. The River Nene flows from its source to the west of Daventry through Northampton, Wellingborough and Peterborough to its estuary in the Wash.

Weedon is located to the south east of Daventry. It lies in a valley bordered to the south by high ground. The Farthingstone Road follows the crest of this high ground. To the north lies more high ground. The A45 Daventry road follows the crest of this high ground.

The Fawsley Arm of the River Nene flows through the village and joins another tributary of the Nene east of the A5 Watling Street.

During periods of heavy rainfall surface water flows down New Street from the Farthingstone Road and the fields adjacent to it. This water collects at the junction of New Street and West Street (the Plume crossroads at the centre of the village) affecting the buildings at this location. The water takes time to drain away. The drainage system in this part of the village was installed in the Victorian era and it would appear that the system, particularly in West Street, is not as efficient as it should be.

The Grand Union Canal

The Grand Union canal flows through Weedon. It passes to the north of the garage and houses on the A5, before going under the A45, and flowing west of the church.

Whilst the canal is only about 1.40 metre deep, the amount of water in the canal system that could affect Weedon is contained between the lock gates at Whilton, and the lock gates at Stoke Bruerne.

The distance between these two locks is approximately 15 miles, or 23.5 kilometres. This means that should the structural integrity of the canal be seriously damaged, and the canal banks collapse 10,692,000 cubic feet of water (2,961,940 cubic metres of water) could cascade into Weedon, causing catastrophic damage.

This doomsday scenario would only happen if serious structural damage was caused to the canal banks, thereby weakening the structural integrity of them.

The most likely cause of flooding from the canal would be if damage was caused to the canal bank, causing water to flow down into the village.

The two areas of the village that could be affected by any major problem on the Grand Union are the church, and the new development at Bull Inn Close. In previous years there has been a problem with water draining from the Grand Union canal into Puddle Bank. The Church grounds have a brick retaining wall which runs from Church Street to the start of the allotments.

Unfortunately there is a gap in this wall to provide access to a path which takes people to the main entrance to the Church. This ensures that if any water does escape from the canal it flows down the canal bank straight into the church grounds.

The only way this problem could be averted is by bricking up the gap, or to ensure that either a metal or wooden panel could be slotted into place, thereby diverting any flood water down Puddle Bank.

In the case of Bull Inn Close there would appear to be sufficient space between the canal and the buildings for any flood water to drain off.

The Canal and River Trust.

The care and control of the canal system is now undertaken by the Canal and River Trust, following the winding up of British Waterways.

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 places new responsibilities on various bodies. The Canal and River Trust is a navigation authority. It inspects, maintains, and operates the water control structure within its ownership primarily to meet its statutory obligations to maintain navigation.

It is not a Risk Management Authority (RMA) as defined by section 6(13) of the Flood Water Management Act 2010.

The Trust is not a Category 1 or 2 responder as defined by section 13 of the act. It is not therefore required to undertake any specific assistance in the event of a flooding incident. By local agreement the Trust may provide specific assistance in the event of a flood incident. This could be in consultation with the Silver Command and/or the Environment Agency.

In terms of managing flood risk the primary responsibility for land drainage and flood prevention rests with the private parties. The Trust does not have any specific responsibilities in relation to flooding. Its responsibilities are those of an owner and operator

Impact of flooding on the residents of Weedon

The Environment Agency have calculated the projected risk to people and property between Weedon and Kislingbury during a 1% annual probability of a probable river flood, taking into account current flood defences as follows:-

	Current	Projected (2100)
Number of people	105	178
Number of properties	57	90

These projections are likely to be affected by future commercial and residential development along the River Nene. Global warming and the associated climate change may also affect these projections.

The Environment Agency has sole responsibility for the management of flood risk for the sea, main rivers and reservoirs. It has a strategic overview for all forms of flooding in addition to its existing responsibility for the prevention, mitigation and remedying of flood damage for main rivers and coastal areas.

Northamptonshire County Council would be the lead agency in dealing with flooding throughout the county.

Flood Warden Scheme

Flood Warden schemes are owned and run by members of the Parish Council, or the local community, and supported by the Environment Agency. They consist of nominated volunteers who receive direct flood warnings from the Environment Agency.

The number of Flood Wardens is totally dependant on the size of the community. They work with the Environment Agency to ensure that the community is prepared to deal with an incident of flooding.

Flood Wardens

To enable the Environment Agency to monitor the risk, and impact of flooding, Parish Councils should have a designated Flood Warden, who would be the eyes and ears of the Environment Agency. They are volunteers, who upon receiving flood warning messages, warn householders in their area likely to be affected by the threat posed by flooding.

Flood wardens would:-

- a) Provide feedback to the local authority and the Environment Agency about people and properties living in the floodplain.
- b) Pass on flood warning information at any time of the day and night.
- c) Offer advice and information to the public.
- d) Check that residents in their area have received flood warnings, after they have been issued.
- e) Identify and support vulnerable members of the community.
- f) Provide vital information during any flooding e.g. number of properties flooded.
- g) Provide assistance and facilities at evacuation centres.

The designated Flood Wardens for Weedon:-

- 1) Mr Fred KAY, 12 West Street, Weedon Tel no 01327 349428
- 2) Mrs Doreen NICHOLSON, 5 New Street, Weedon Tel no 01327 341569.
- 3) Mr Ray MASTERS, 48 Riverside Drive, Weedon Tel no 07986855292

Householders can prepare for flooding by:-

- 1) Preparing a flood kit of essential items.
- 2) Check their insurance cover for flooding.
- 3) Making a list of important contact numbers.
- 4) Know how to, and if necessary, turn off the gas, electricity and water mains supply.
- 5) Move important, and sentimental items, to safety. e.g. photo albums.
- 6) Thinking what else they can move to safety during a flood e.g. pets, car, electrical items

Contents of a flood kit

Flooding can happen very quickly, and it is best to be prepared by putting together a kit of essential items:-

- 1) Copy of the house insurance documents.
- 2) A torch, with spare batteries.
- 3) A wind up, or battery radio.
- 4) Warm waterproof clothing and blankets.
- 5) First aid kit, and prescription medication.
- 6) Bottled water and non-perishable food.
- 7) Baby food and baby care items.
- 8) List of important contact numbers.
- 9) Mobile phone.

The flood kit should be kept where it is easily accessible.

Flood Alert Situation

After being advised by the Environment Agency of a flood warning the Flood Warden would:-

- a) Ensure that all residents are aware of the flood alert situation.
- b) Advise residents to commence the household emergency plan.
- c) Put in place flood prevention measures i.e. distribute sandbags to vulnerable households.
- d) If possible assist the vulnerable residents in the affected areas to put in place their flood resistant products.
- e) If teams of volunteers arrive direct them to the households most in need of assistance.

At no time should Flood Wardens put their own health and safety at risk. Their own home and family should be their first priority.

Anglian Water have installed a monitoring system along the course of the River Nene.

One of these devices is located at the bridge by the Plume Public House in the centre of the village. There is another device located where the River Nene passes under the A5 to the east of the village.

These devices monitor the water level of the River Nene every 15 minutes. This information is automatically fed into the Anglian Water control system. Once the water level reaches a specified point it activates an automatic alarm system, which allows Anglian Water to take appropriate action almost immediately.

Flooding Situation

If the rescue services have arrived work closely with them and follow their instructions. If the rescue services have not arrived advise affected residents to evacuate their homes and head for the nominated evacuation centres, while it is still safe to do so.

If possible a record should be kept of all residents who have had to evacuate their homes. A similar record should be kept of all residents who use the nominated evacuation centres.

If this is impracticable all houses that have been evacuated should be marked with waterproof chalk.

FLOOD WARNING RECEIVED

**ADVISE RESIDENTS OF FLOOD
WARNING**

CHECK DRAINS

AWAIT UPDATES

**INCREASED FLOOD ALERT SITUATION
RECEIVED**

ADVISE RESIDENTS

FLOOD SITUATION

**ENCOURAGE RESIDENTS
TO EVACUATE, IF
APPROPRIATE**

**WORK CLOSELY
WITH RESCUE SERVICES**

MARK HOUSES EVACUATED

**DIRECT VOLUNTEER
ORGANISATIONS TO
VULNERABLE
RESIDENTS**

Vulnerable Areas in Weedon

The vulnerable areas in Weedon are those properties that have been built on the flood plane. They are Neneside Close, Brookside, West Street, Bridge Street, and Riverside Drive. There is sheltered housing for elderly people in Riverside.

The effects of flooding would be temporary homelessness; vehicles and property damage; together with hypothermia and other health threats.

Emergency Accommodation

If an incident of flooding occurs in the village, which requires residents to be evacuated from their own homes they will be taken to a designated refuge, where they can stay until it is safe for them to return to their homes.

The two designated centres for Weedon are the village hall, in West Street, and the Scout Hut in New Street. The key holders for these buildings are:-

Village Hall

Phillipa RUCK	2 The Greys, Weedon	(01327 349943)
John WILSHIRE	Hillcroft, New Street, Weedon	(01327 341050)
Tony HURLEY	12 Queen Street, Weedon	(01327 340935)
Dave KEELER	"Duncana" 20 The Greys, Weedon	(01327 340315)

The Scout Hut

George BUSHELL	1 West Street, Weedon	(01327 342528) (07860 169284)
Libby HART	47 Church Street, Weedon	(01327 341816)
Anthony EDINBOROUGH	2 Eton Close, Weedon	(01327 341245)
Tom EATON	27 Cavalry Fields Weedon	(01327 312245)

There are an unspecified number of sandbags in the village, which are stored in the gatehouse at the cemetery on the outskirts of the village.

The key holders for the Cemetery Gatehouse are:-

Sue HALKETT	16 St Mary's Way, Weedon	(01327 341057)
Stuart WATTS	122 New Croft, Weedon	(07761 473766)
John BAKER	32 South Street, Weedon	(07557 521015)

Information regarding the risk of flooding can be obtained via the Environment Agency website. (www.environment-agency.gov.uk) The Flood Warning Service can be contacted on the following no:- 0845 988 188 There is a three day forecast, which shows the national picture, as well as detailed information for more specific areas e.g. the Upper Nene, which includes Weedon.

Detailed weather reports, and warnings regarding the risk of flooding, are broadcast by the national and local media e.g. BBC News and weather reports via national TV and Radio broadcasts as well as the local radio stations (BBC Radio Northampton).

Adopted July 2015

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Chairman