

Groundwater Flooding Community Briefing

11th February 2026

Current Situation

At the time of writing there are 34 of the 35 groundwater flood warnings in force across the Dorset and Wiltshire area. We have seen further rainfall that has caused groundwater levels to rise further. High groundwater levels are also increasing the flood risk from rivers due to additional base flow, and several fluvial (river) flood warnings are active across the area. This briefing provides an update on the current flood risk, where groundwater flooding is happening and information and guidance on flood warnings.

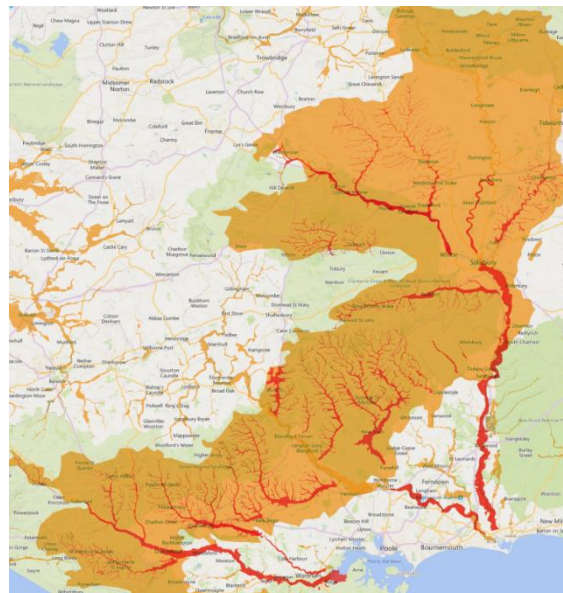
Further unsettled weather is forecast throughout February which may cause levels to rise further. You can find the latest information here: www.gov.uk/check-flooding

Groundwater flood warnings are an opt-in service; please check your flood risk and sign up for flood warnings here: www.gov.uk/get-flood-warnings

Please continue to report flooding. Groundwater flooding can be reported using the FORT (Flood Online Reporting Tool) <https://floodreport.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/> (available to residents in both Dorset & Wiltshire) tool or directly to your Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

Our staff have been out on the ground talking to affected residents and we will continue to visit communities over the coming weeks. We are very grateful to residents who have taken the time to speak with us, many of whom have been flooded. This information helps us understand groundwater flooding and helps to co-ordinate a response with our partners.

You can find an overview of Groundwater Flooding and impacts of groundwater flooding here: [What is Groundwater?](#) and an [Animation on Groundwater](#).



Map of South Wessex showing current Flood Alerts and Warnings

Site Specific Information

Salisbury

In the Salisbury Plain area, groundwater levels are rising and are likely to continue to rise for the next few weeks. Several locations—Chilmark, Teffont, and the Dene—are expected to peak this week, with Alerts in place until the end of March.

Salisbury City Centre is also experiencing high groundwater levels, and we anticipate flooding.

Levels in the slow reacting areas of the Till and Bourne are rising and this is having an influence on



the Hampshire Avon, where river levels are high and still rising. We are working closely with our partners including Wiltshire Council, and we are out in communities who have been affected by groundwater flooding.

West Dorset

We expect levels in the West Dorset area to continue to rise this week before peaking late this week or early next week. Properties in this area are being affected, either by property flooding or are pumping water away from their property to try and reduce flood risk. Roads, including main roads like the A35, where traffic lights are in place outside of Winterborne Abbas, are also being flooded.



Winterborne Kingston

Cranborne Chase

In Cranborne Chase, levels are high and are expected to continue to rise into next week, well above flood warning levels. Areas with properties affected range from Pimperne to Milborne St Andrew, and all the other groundwater influenced areas in between. Several roads in the Cranborne Chase area are closed and will likely remain closed for some time.

Areas such as Tollard Royal and Sixpenny Handley are seeing impacts to sewage systems and water running down roads.

Actions and advice

Unlike river flooding, groundwater flooding can persist for weeks or even months as water slowly drains into the chalk and limestone aquifers beneath the ground causing the water table to rise.

- Think and prepare now for what you'll do if flooding occurs where you live, don't wait until flooding happens
- If you have a personal flood plan you should put it into action
- Move valuables from basements and cellars
- If you have a pump, ensure it is serviced and working effectively
- Residents with septic tanks are advised to eliminate all non-essential water use and flush toilets as little as possible until the ground is no longer flooded.
- Keep drains and gullies around your property free of debris
- You may need to improve surface water drainage and/or install and assess sump pumping arrangements
- If you own part of the riverbank you should keep the banks and bed of the river clear of debris (Find out more: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse>)
- We are encouraging parishes at risk to develop a [Community flood plan](#), identifying local issues and working with the different agencies to prepare and respond to flooding

Notes on pumping

If you are thinking about where you will pump water to, you should contact:

- Your local Environment Agency office if you are thinking about pumping water into main rivers or boreholes



- Your local authority if you are thinking about pumping water into ditches, watercourses or piped watercourses
- The water company if you are thinking about pumping water into public surface water sewers or foul sewers
- The Highways Authority if you are thinking about pumping water into highway drain.
- Consider the risks of pumping onto or near a highway or footpath. You must make sure that pumping water from your property doesn't impact others, this would include when the water freezes and causes a danger.

Useful Contacts

Dorset Council: 01305 221000 www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/report-flooding

Flood Online Reporting Tool (FORT): <https://floodreport.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/> (available to residents in both Dorset & Wiltshire)

Dorset Council Sandbags & Local Flooding Advice:

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/emergencies-severe-weather/flooding/sandbags-and-local-flooding-advice.aspx>

Dorset Council Urgent Highway Drainage Maintenance: 01305 221020

Dorset Council Non-Urgent Highway Drainage Maintenance:

<https://dorsetself.achieveservice.com/service/report-a-gully--drain-or-flooding-issue>

Wiltshire Council: 0300 456 0100 drainage@wiltshire.gov.uk or my.wiltshire.gov.uk/

Wessex Water: 0345 600 4600 (24 hours)

Floodline: 0345 988 118 (24 hours)

Environment Agency National Incident Hotline: 0800 80 70 60

Environment Agency Local Enquiries: WessexEnquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

