

AYLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL FLOOD PLAN

Introduction

This plan describes how flood risk is to be managed in Aylesford. It is recognised that the Parish Council's response capability is limited but that, in liaison with other agencies, it has an important role to play. Key to the success of this plan, however, is the vigilance of residents (including Flood Wardens) and the parts they play in the event of a flood.

The plan is also intended to be a source of useful and relevant information in the event of a flood. To ensure that it is kept up to date, the plan will be reviewed at least every six months.

Flood warnings

Flood warnings are distributed by the Environment Agency (EA) and their warning system is called **Flood Warnings Direct**.

Anyone who lives or works in a flood warning area can register to receive warnings by telephone, mobile, SMS text, fax, pager or email. Registration is via **Floodline** on 0345 988 1188 or 0845 988 1188 which are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also register online.

The types of warnings issued are as follows:

Flood Alert



What it means

Flooding is possible. Be prepared.

When it's used

Two hours to two days in advance of flooding.

What to do

- Be prepared to act on your flood plan.
- Prepare a flood kit of essential items.
- Monitor local water levels and the flood forecast on the EA website (see below).

Flood Warning



What it means

Flooding is expected. Immediate action required.

When it's used

Half an hour to one day in advance of flooding.

What to do

- Move family, pets and valuables to a safe place.
- Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies if safe to do so.
- Put flood protection equipment in place.

Severe Flood Warning



What it means

Severe flooding. Danger to life.

When it's used

When flooding poses a significant threat to life.

What to do

- Stay in a safe place with a means of escape.
- Be ready should you need to evacuate from your home.
- Co-operate with the emergency services.
- Call 999 if you are in immediate danger.

Warnings no longer in force

What it means

No further flooding is currently expected in your area.

When it's used

When river or sea conditions begin to return to normal.

What to do

- Be careful. Flood water may still be around for several days.
- If you've been flooded, ring your insurance company as soon as possible.

Flood alerts and warnings are issued for specific areas and the relevant areas are

Flood Alerts – 064WAT1MedEst Tidal Medway, Medway Estuary and Isle of Grain

Flood Warnings - 064FWF8TidalMed Tidal River Medway between Allington Lock and Cuxton.

The status of flood warnings can be monitored by telephoning Floodline on 0345 988 1188 followed by option 1 and using the code **0126425** or via the Environment Agency website

<http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/flood/31618.aspx>

Flood warnings are not issued for the Aylesford Stream but flood alerts, covering a larger area, may indicate that the flood risk for the stream is increasing. (see appendix 1).

Flood Events in the Parish

Aylesford is at separate risk of flooding from both the River Medway and the Aylesford Stream.

The River Medway defences protecting the central village were designed to resist a 1 in 250 year flood event.

There is currently no protection from the Aylesford Stream and the frequency of flood events is about once in every ten years. (See Appendix 1.)

Parish Flood Wardens

The roles and responsibilities of a Flood Warden include:

Before flooding

- raise awareness of flood risk such that individuals take measures to protect themselves and their property in advance of a flood
- identify/be aware of the flooding problems of the community
- identify properties with disabled, elderly or infirm residents so that priority can be given
- monitor watercourses and report blockages and maintenance requirements early to avoid unnecessary flooding
- oversee or take appropriate action to clear blockages where necessary (to avoid unnecessary flooding)
- ensure flood gates are closed

During a flood

- communication and liaison between the community and organisations providing assistance and support (per Contact List below)
- open the sandbag store as necessary

After flooding

- may provide guidance and advice during the clear up
- recording flood extent, levels and properties flooded whilst details are still fresh in memory

The Flood Wardens for Aylesford Parish are :

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Andrew Rillie | Anchor Farm | 01622 710582 |
| Mark "Ollie" Oliver | 21 Rochester Road | 01622 716986 |
| | | 07786 585555 |
| Steve Willis | 29 Rochester Road | 01622 715048 |
| | | 07900 560627 |
| Sandy Gregory | 29 Rochester Road | 01622 715048 |
| | | 07941 503464 |

If none of the above is available (for example on week days), the Parish Clerk (01622 717084) will act as reserve Flood Warden.

Sandbags

Sandbags should be deployed in accordance with the 'Sandbag Policy' of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC). The policy provides that sandbags are likely to be made available exclusively when residential property is in imminent danger of flooding.

TMBC, however, does not guarantee that sandbags will be able to be delivered in adequate time or sufficient quantities during an emergency and residents that anticipate a need should purchase them in advance or better still, consider the alternative methods of property flood protection.

The sandbag store located opposite the entrance of the Aylesford Community Centre (AVCC) holds a stock of approximately 500 bags for use in areas at most risk. There is also a wheel barrow in the store to help move small quantities of bags quickly.

The sandbag store is open and available for use.

Sandbags can be obtained from most builders merchants.

Inspection and Maintenance of Screens

In addition to the Environment Agency the following will be responsible for inspecting the areas indicated.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Rochester Road screens | The Parish Council |
| • Old Bridge Gardens screen | The Parish Council |
| • Hengist screen | The Proprietor/The Parish Council |

Parish Control, Evacuation & Rest Centres

Parish Control will be set up when necessary in the AVCC. The Parish Clerk will ensure that the AVCC is open to serve as the Parish Control and will help TMBC and the emergency authorities to organise the communications/information sections. In the Parish Clerk's absence, the AVCC caretaker, Vince Keeler 07999 863446 or the Secretary of the AVCC, Carole Difford (01622 710762) will do so.

It is up to the Police to initiate evacuation, should that prove necessary.

It is TMBC's responsibility to arrange rest centre(s) and transport. While the AVCC is a designated rest centre, it may not always be the best option.

Who does what during a flood?

The Environment Agency

- Issue Flood Warnings
- Receive and record details
- Monitor the situation and advise other organisations
- Deal with emergency repairs and blockages on main rivers including the Medway and the Aylesford Stream.
- Ensure flood gates are closed in an emergency
- Maintain the flood defence pumping station beside the new car park.
- Respond to pollution incidents

Kent Fire and Rescue Service

- Rescue
- Respond to emergency incidents as required
- Assist where a need is identified and the use of personnel and equipment (eg, pumps) is required.

Kent Police

- Initiate evacuation, should that prove necessary

Kent County Council Highways

- 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

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

- Co-ordinating role for the Borough
- Emergency assistance (S138 LGA 1972) – Provide sandbags
- Environmental Health Issues – pollution
- Blocked road channels and gully gratings – street cleansing

Southern Water

- Clearing blockages in public sewers
- May take action to protect property from flooding from discharges from sewer systems
- Emergency overpumping or tankering at wastewater pumping stations.

Property Owners

- Prevent water from entering property as far as possible
- Move valuable possessions above areas liable to be flooded
- Switch off electricity and gas supplies at mains
- Move to a safe area if life is at risk.

Contact List

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|--|
| Environment Agency | Floodline | 0345 988 1188 0845 988 1188 (option 4 to speak to a human being) |
| | Incident Hotline | 0800 80 70 60 |
| | Enquiries | 08708 506 506 |
| Kent Fire & Rescue Service | | 01622 692121 |
| Kent Police | | 101 |
| Aylesford Parish Council | | 01622 717084 |
| KCC Highways | | 03000 414141 |

NB: KCC Highways are the people to contact should roads need to be closed

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council | | 01732 844522 |
| Kent Resilience Team (KRT) office number | | 01622 212409 |
| KRT Duty Emergency Planning Officer 24/7 | | 03000 414 999 |
| Southern Water | | 0845 278 0845 0330 303 0368 (from mobile) |
| National Flood Forum | | 01299 403055 |

Information sources

Information on flood warnings for the Medway can be obtained from the Environment Agency - environment-agency.gov.uk, including a 3 day forecast at

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/3days/125305.aspx>

7 day High Tide predictions (New Hythe and Allington Lock) can be obtained from easytide.com

30 day High Tide predictions for Sheerness can be obtained from pol.ac.uk
National Tidal and Sea Level Facilities (this source is used by the Environment Agency)

Weather predictions can be obtained from uk.weather.com
and www.metoffice.gov.uk

Direct links to the appropriate pages of these sites can be found on the Aylesford Flood Information site - w.aylesford-info.co.uk

What to do in the event of flooding

At the first sign of flooding or that flooding is imminent, whoever you are, wherever you are, raise the alarm. Knock on doors, contact the nearest available Flood Warden(s).

NB: Should a flood event occur on a week day (when many residents, including Flood Wardens, may be at work) alert the Parish Clerk at the Parish Council offices, 23 Forstal Road (behind the Community Centre).

The Flood Warden(s) will help to organise the distribution of sandbags, as necessary.

Do what you can to protect your family, home and contents.

If you have a flood barrier, put it up.

Gather essential items together either upstairs or in a high place.

Fill jugs and saucepans with clean water.

Move your family and pets upstairs, or to a high place with a means of escape.

Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies when flood water is about to enter your home if safe to do so.

DO NOT touch sources of electricity when standing in flood water.

Keep listening to local radio for updates or call Floodline 0345 988 1188 or 0845 988 1188.

Flood water can rise quickly, stay calm and reassure those around you. Call 999 if you are in danger.

Important! Flood water is dangerous

- Avoid walking or driving through it.
- Keep children and vulnerable people away from it.
- Wash your hands thoroughly if you touch it.

For more information, take a look at the Environment Agency publication:

During a flood - Practical advice on what to do to stay safe in a flood

A copy is posted on www.aylesford-info.co.uk. Copies are also available from the Parish Council offices.

Appendix 1

The Aylesford Stream

As stated above, flood warnings are not issued for the Aylesford Stream although 'Flood Alert' warnings tend to cover larger areas and may indicate that the flood risk for the stream is increasing.

Also, as stated above, there is currently no protection from the Aylesford Stream and the frequency of flood events is about once in every ten years.

Although there are plans to provide Property Level Protection for each home in the affected area, there is no scope for complacency.

While the frequency of flood events is categorised as one in ten, the Stream flooded in 2001, 2009 and again in 2010.

In the absence of a formal warning system, a locally based "neighbourhood watch" based system is needed.

This means keeping an eye on water levels and raising the alarm when levels reach a critical point.

NB: As a guide, a critical point has been reached when levels reach **4** on the stream level indicator between Bush Row and the High Street. If levels reach **5** action should be taken.

Important!

If the stream level indicator rises above **3**, make sure – or ask someone else (eg a Flood Warden or the Parish Clerk) to make sure - that the trash screen (at the High Street end of Rochester Road) is clear. A rake is kept at The Bush for this purpose.

A neighbourhood watch type system could be supplemented by greater awareness of known flood risk indicators, i.e.

- times and dates of tides, and
- adverse weather conditions (especially sustained heavy rainfall and/or snow melt).

(See **Information sources**, above)

Residents are advised to take whatever precautions they can to protect themselves and their property from flooding. The Flood Wardens may be able to assist in this.

Points to watch

None of the following factors by itself is an indicator that the Aylesford stream is about to be flooded, but the observations of one or more indicate the increase in the risk of flooding:

*Heavy rainfall and/or snow melt from Blue Bell Hill (see ***NB** below)*

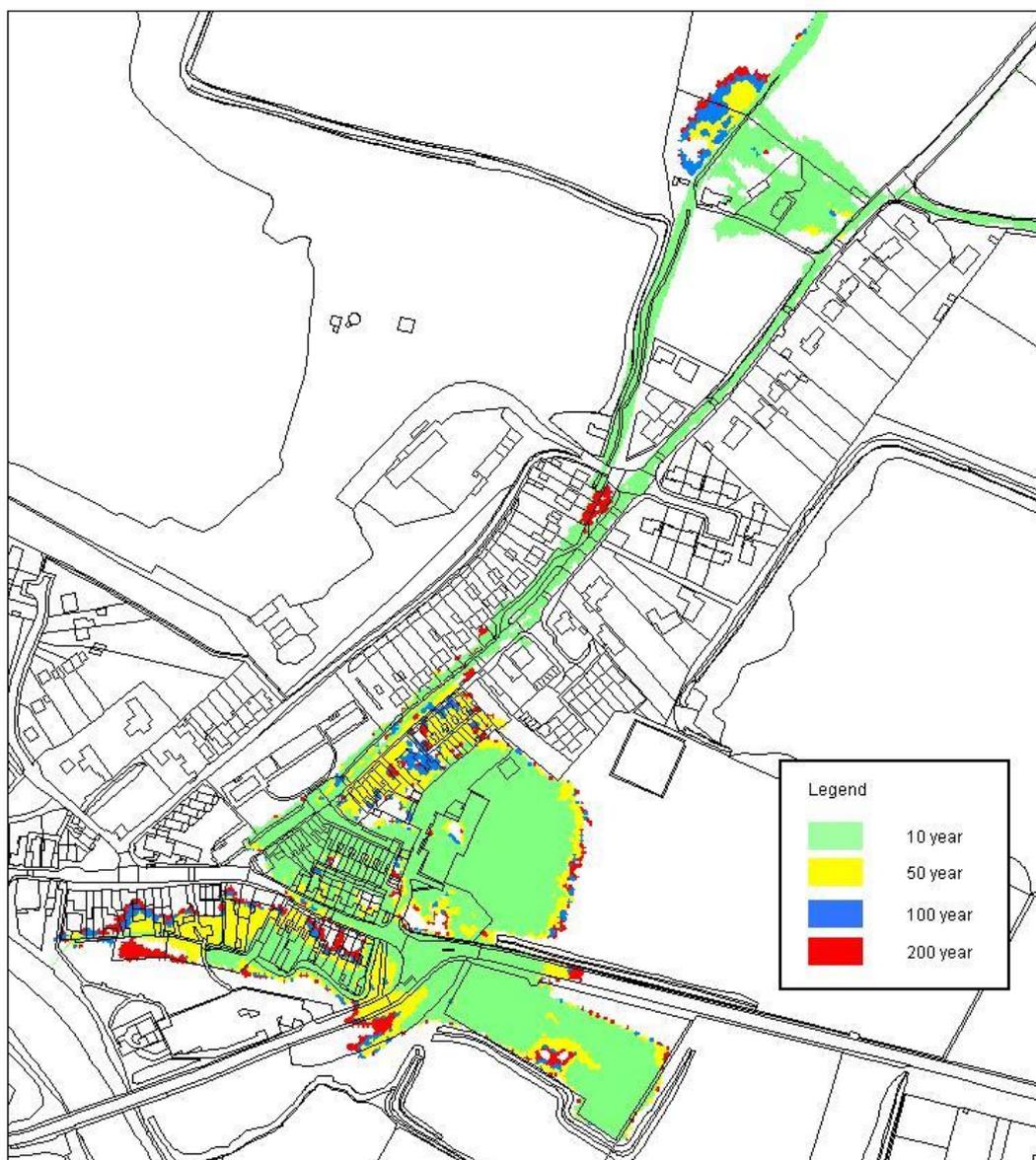
A build up of leaves in the stream or other debris, possibly blocking the trash screen at the High Street end of Rochester Road

High tide of the Medway, shutting the non-return valve in the channel from the Aylesford Stream to the Medway

'Flood Alert' warnings that the Medway is expected to flood (as a result of high tide and/or heavy rains) – in which event the non-return valve in the channel from the Aylesford Stream to the Medway would be shut

***NB:** *If the stream has risen so that the second pipe at the crossing between Anchor and Cowleze Farms is in play, that is an indication that the village is vulnerable*



Properties at risk

If the stream floods, properties most at risk are in Rochester Road (from the Village Club to the High Street) and Bush Row. Houses on the north side of Forstal Road (between the High Street and the Community Centre) may also be at risk, as may the backs of houses on the south side of Forstal Road (between the High Street and the Community Centre) should the stream overflow into the gardens of the Hengist.