

Groundwater Flooding Community Briefing

3rd February 2026

Current Situation

At time of writing, there are currently 32 of the 35 groundwater Flood Warnings in force across the Dorset and Wiltshire area.

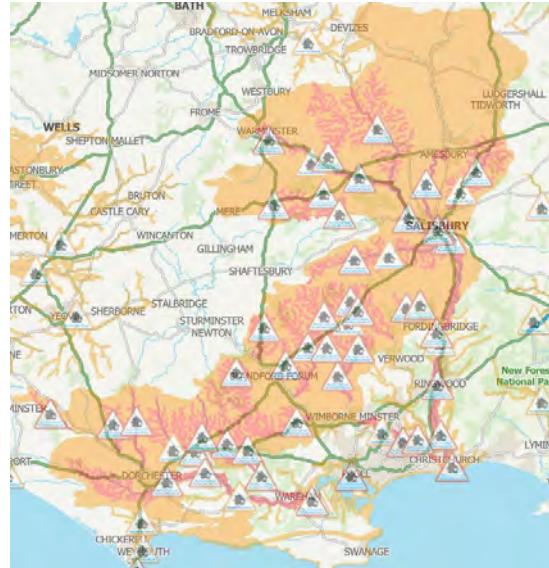
You can find the latest information here: www.gov.uk/check-flooding

There are approximately 18,000 properties across Dorset and Wiltshire that are at risk of groundwater flooding, yet only 4000 people/properties are signed up to groundwater flood warnings. Please check your flood risk and sign up for flood warnings here Check for flooding in England - GOV.UK.

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).

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

Overview

We continue to see widespread groundwater flooding across the Dorset and Wiltshire area. 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. Groundwater levels are at or near record highs, matching or exceeding 2013/14 levels.

Between October 2025 and January 2026, the Wessex area received 629mm of rainfall across areas at risk of groundwater flooding. On top of this, in the 8-day period following Storm Chandra a further 120mm of rainfall fell in areas at groundwater flood risk. This has caused a sharp rise in groundwater levels across Wessex. Further unsettled weather is forecast throughout February which may cause levels to rise.

In the West of Dorset, levels have peaked or are peaking early this week. In the Cranborne Chase area, levels are forecast to peak this week, whereas in the Salisbury Plain area levels are forecast to continue to rise until at least mid-February.



West Dorset update.

Areas affected include: the Cerne, Sydling, Piddle and North & South Winterbourne Valleys.

All 10 Groundwater Flood Warnings have been issued in this area. In the West of Dorset, groundwater levels have either peaked or are peaking early this week. At Dickley Down borehole, levels exceeded the previous recorded maximum level (172.590mAOD) and in one 24hr period rose by nearly 6m. Borehole levels are comparable to levels reached in January 2014 and impacts are expected to be similar. Property flooding is expected; some properties will experience problems with basement flooding and disruption to sewage systems. Many roads in the affected areas have been closed.



Groundwater around South Winterbourne

Cranborne Chase

Areas affected include: Pimperne, Iwerne, the Tarrants, Crichel, Gussage, Allen, Ebble & Crane Valleys.

In the Cranborne Chase area all 12 of the Groundwater Flood Warnings are in force. Groundwater levels are expected to peak this week, though flooding is likely to persist beyond the peak borehole levels. The Iwerne Hill Farm borehole peaked at 117.638mAOD but has since started to recede down to 115.437mAOD (03/02/2026) but remains above the flood warning threshold. Property and road flooding is expected, and some properties will experience basement flooding and sewage system disruption.



Road Flooding in Tarrant Monkton

Salisbury Plain

Areas affected include: The Dene, The Chillmarks, Teffont, Tilshead (and the wider Till area) and the Bourne Valley (lower, middle, upper).

In the Salisbury Plain area, 10 of the 13 Groundwater Flood Warnings are in force. Levels are rising and are forecast to continue rising until at least mid-February. Several of the flood warnings have been issued in advance to allow people to prepare for flooding and take actions such as deploying property level protection.



Flooding at Coombe Bissett



Actions and advice

- 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
- 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 [Report flooding - Dorset Council](#)

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 [Wiltshire Council Booking and Reporting](#)

Wessex Water: 0345 600 4600 (24 hours)

Floodline: 0345 988 118 (24 hours)

Environment Agency National Incident Hotline: 0800 80 70 60

Environment Agency Flood Resilience Team: floodwessex@environment-agency.gov.uk (office hours)

