

Planning for floods in Hoxne

Storm Babet in 2024 flooded c25 properties in Hoxne and came close to flooding many more. For many parishioners, this was their first experience of natural emergency. Suffolk County Council was required to produce a s19 Flood report investigating causes of flood and identifying actions that could be taken to mitigate flooding. As weather patterns change and extremes of weather occur, it is good to be prepared at an individual, parish and county level.

This leaflet is designed to provide useful information to parishioners in Hoxne, helping them to be prepared before any flooding, support them during flooding and direct them to sources quickly to sources of help after flooding.

Private Homeowners are responsible for the flood resilience of their properties. If you are a tenant (private or council), you might want to discuss this with your landlord.

There are multiple other agencies involved on flood planning:
Suffolk County Council – the lead local flood authority
The Environment Agency – lead organisation for flood management and issuing flood warnings on main rivers (the Waveney)

Internal Drainage Board – responsible for land drainage and flood defence on ordinary watercourses – Goldbrook and Chickering Beck

Hoxne Parish Council – responsible for managing flood risk at a community level, preparing for flood and producing flood action plans.

Private Landowners – responsible for management of water from land or watercourses

Before a flood

1. Sign up for flood alerts at <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings> Note – flood alerts are for main rivers so will tell you that the Waveney might flood but will not cover the Goldbrook or Chickering Beck – the likelihood is that if the Waveney is affected, so will these other watercourses.
2. Check local radio and Floodline (0345 988 1188)
3. Check the Parish Council website which will be updated: <https://hoxne.onesuffolk.net>
4. Consider preparing a personal flood plan if your property is liable to flooding – this might include:
 - Thinking about how you might stop water entering your property
 - Clearing gutters and drains and consider whether you need sandbags or Floodsax or a waterpump
 - Knowing where to switch off electricity and water
 - Storing important personal documents, money, insurance documents and personal items in waterproof storage.
 - Charging your phones, power packs batteries, torches etc
 - Preparing a contact list of numbers including: family, insurance (home, vehicle etc), bank, medical, utility providers (electricity, water, broadband, phone companies etc), doctor, vet
 - Consider creating a flood pack including dry clothing and footwear, waterproofs, important documents, phones/chargers, medication, water, food (including baby food/milk) if needed, torches
 - Having a plan for pets including carriers, food, medication, leads

Immediately before a flood

- Check important sites for information – flood warnings and local information
- Turn off your electricity, gas and water
- Raise curtains up off the floor
- Deploy any protection against flood water entering your home: fit flood gates, put out sandbags/Floodsax, cover airbricks, toilet overflow stoppers
- Raise soft furnishings and rugs off the floor
- Gather important documents, contact lists and any flood packs you may have prepared
- Remove family, pets, car away from the water if safe to do so
- Check on any vulnerable neighbours

During a flood

- If flooding is such that people may need to leave their home, the Church and Pavillion will be open to provide shelter.
- Follow any advice from authorities including emergency services
- Flood signs will be deployed by the Parish Council on roads that are impassable
- Ensure you have all your important information and essential belongings
- Minimise walking or driving through flooded areas and heed any signs warning of flood
- Do not put yourself or others at risk
- Check on any vulnerable neighbours
- Let family and friends know you are ok

After a flood

- Do not return to your property if you have been evacuated until you are told it is safe to do so
- When re-entering your home, wear waterproofs and be aware that flood water can be contaminated
- Wear appropriate waterproof or protective clothing when cleaning up
- Contact your insurance company to start the claims process
- Check the Suffolk County Council and Parish websites for information on any emergency support available
- Check with your utility providers to see if your service need checking before services are restored
- Dispose of damaged property appropriately
- Support neighbours recovering from flood

The following sites may be helpful in planning:

The National Flood Forum - <https://nationalfloodforum.org.uk>
Flood Mary – a site established by a campaigner who has flooded many times and has expertise in the process of flood home defence and recovery –

<https://floodmary.com/>

The Government Website - <https://www.gov.uk/help-during-flood>

Note: We hope that this will help you to prepare. The Parish Council will work to support the community but we are not a replacement for the emergency services and cannot provide flood prevention equipment for individual houses.