



Flood Actions Manual

Wastecare Limited, Colthrop, Thatcham

Wastecare Ltd

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Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
Órla Fitzgerald Civil Engineering Apprentice	Nora Balboni Senior Engineer	Fida Choudhury Lead Verifier	

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n/a		Wastecare Ltd

Prepared for:

Wastecare Ltd

Prepared by:

Órla Fitzgerald
Civil Engineering Apprentice
E: orla.fitzgerald@aecom.com

AECOM Limited
AECOM House
63-77 Victoria Street
St Albans
Hertfordshire AL1 3ER
United Kingdom

T: +44(0)1727 535000
aecom.com

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Introduction

This Flood Actions Manual has been prepared in relation to the Wastecare Ltd waste management facility in Thatcham, West Berkshire, approximate post code RG19 4NB.

This Flood Actions Manual sets out the actions required before, during, and after a flood. It should be printed and kept in the site offices at all times and form part of site safety inductions.

More detailed information around the risk of flooding at the site is provided within the Flood Management Plan¹, which has been prepared alongside this Flood Actions Manual.

¹AECOM, March 2021. Wastecare Thatcham Flood Management Plan.

Actions Before a Flood

Preparation

The following actions should be undertaken at the earliest convenience, to ensure preparedness in advance of a flood event:

1. Ensure loose waste is contained in suitable containers at all times.
2. All staff members should sign up to the Environment Agency (EA) Flood Warning System via the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings>.
3. Find an appropriate location to move vehicles ahead of a flood. An agreement should be made with neighbouring property owners to allow Wastecare Ltd staff to move vehicles onto neighbouring land outside of the floodplain following receipt of a flood warning. Examples of appropriate locations are included in the accompanying Flood Management Plan. Once agreed, these locations need to be added on the evacuation map displayed on notice boards.
4. Identify a suitable assembly point so that staff count can be taken to make sure everyone has evacuated when necessary. A printed map of the evacuation route and alternative parking places should be placed on the office notice board.
5. Place an emergency kit and sensitive equipment, i.e. laptops, in the raised office unit.
6. This Flood Actions Plan should be included in the induction pack for new joiners and safety inductions. Regular (twice a year) flood drills need to be organised to make sure staff members are familiar with the process and route.
7. Assign a Flood Marshall and a number of substitute flood marshalls: this should be a member of staff who is on site most of the time. The Flood Champion will be in charge of leading the response required based upon the level of alert issued and should have this document to hand for dissemination to other staff members.
8. Business Continuity Plans: Wastecare should agree contingency plans with clients/operators in the event that the site is not operational for the duration of a flood to enable a seamless return to business as usual after the flood event.
9. Avoid lone working where possible particularly in flood season in winter.

Flood Alerts/Warnings

Based upon levels in the River Kennet at upstream locations, the EA would issue a flood alert, a flood warning, or a severe flood warning, which can be checked in three ways:

1. Visiting the website <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/>;
2. Calling the Floodline telephone number: 0345 988 1188 (or 0345 602 6340 for hard of hearing); or
3. Via text, phone, or email if signed up to the EA flood warning service.

Flood Alert – What To Do



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 our website.

A Flood Alert means you need to prepare as flooding is possible, requiring the following preparations:

- Prepare a bag with essential items such as important documents and medication to take with you if you have to leave the site.
- Check that all sensitive equipment such as laptops and important documents are located in the raised office unit.
- Check flood warnings and keep up to date with the latest situation by calling the Floodline or following @EnvAgency and #floodaware on Twitter.
- Check the site to ensure that all waste is contained within suitable containers to prevent lose debris from being swept up in potential flood water.

Flood Warning – What To Do



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

A Flood Warning means you need to act as flooding is expected. You should do all the actions for a flood alert but also:

- Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies. Never touch an electrical switch if you're standing in water;
- Evacuate the site, as per the evacuation procedures outlined in Chapter 6 of this report; and
- Move vehicles to higher ground if it is safe to do so.

Severe Flood Warning – What To Do



SEVERE FLOOD WARNING

What it means

Severe flooding.
Danger to life.

When it's used

When flooding poses a
significant risk to life.

What to do

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

A Severe Flood Warning means there is danger to life and you must act now:

- Call 999 if in immediate danger;
- Follow advice from emergency services and evacuate following the procedures set out in this report;
- Alert neighbours and offer help if it's safe to do so;
- Avoid driving or walking through flood water. Just 300mm of fast flowing water could move a car and even shallow moving water can knock you off your feet.
- Keep occupants away from floodwater as it may contain heavy debris, sharp objects, open manhole covers, sewage, and chemicals.
- Wash your hands if you have been in contact with flood water which may contain toxic substances.

Actions During a Flood

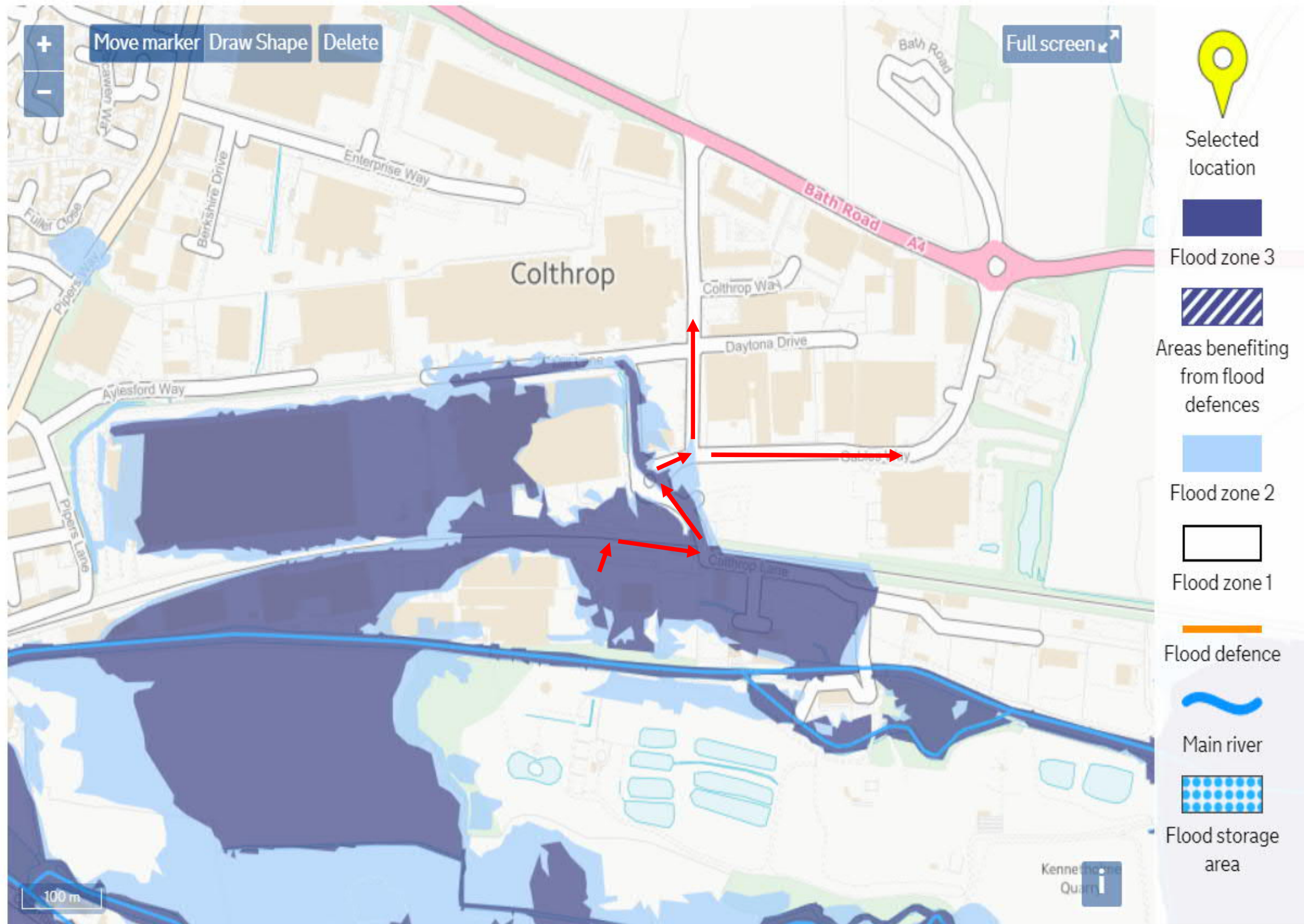
Evacuation Routes

If flooding has not yet started, then occupants should evacuate the site immediately. The recommended evacuation route to move away from the floodplain is shown overleaf.

Once agreed with neighbouring properties, a plan showing the temporary parking place for site vehicles during a flood will need to be added by Wastecare.

If flooding has already started, occupants should seek refuge in the raised office unit and notify the emergency services.

Evacuation Route



Dangers of Flood Water

In a flood event it is imperative to remember the following:

- Do not walk through fast-flowing water. Even shallow flows at 6 inches can knock an adult to their feet.
- Do not swim through flood water. It may sweep people away or cause injuries from objects caught in the flow.
- If walking through flood water is necessary, use a pole or stick to maintain balance and identify ditches or trip hazards.
- Do not drive through the flood area.
- Avoid contact with the flood water. It may be polluted by chemicals, sewage or waste materials from site.
- Do not enter flooded buildings as the water may have caused structural damage.

Actions After a Flood

Recovery after a Flood

Following a flood event, these steps should be taken:

- Contact your insurance company to follow their advice. The National Flood Forum can offer help and support on 01299 403055.
- Check with the emergency services that it is safe to return to site.
- Once the floodwater has receded, take advice from specialists before starting repairs and clean-up of the site where necessary. The insurance company may provide a service to have the site cleaned.
- In the first instance the site should be inspected for signs of waste spillage. Should this be the case, the site should not be entered, and the incident should be reported to the EA. Keeping the waste in secured containers and storage units should minimise the risk of spillages occurring.
- If required, areas of ponding should be pumped away from site using a generator into a discharge drain. Consent from Highways England/Thames Water may need to be obtained prior to doing this.
- Buildings should be assessed for structural damage from water before entering. If electrical mains could not be turned off prior to the flood, a qualified electrician should be contacted to do this. Whilst buildings and equipment can be washed down with hoses, this should not be done at high pressure, as this may spray contaminated matter into the air. All areas affected by the flood should be disinfected.

Key Contacts

The following lists key contacts that can provide support prior to, during and after a flood event.

Environment Agency

24 hour Floodline telephone: 0345 988 1188
River flooding reporting telephone: 0800 807 0600
24 hour Incident hotline: 0800 80 70 60

Flood Forecasting Centre Extreme Rainfall Alert Service

Telephone: 0300 12345 01

Highways England

Email: info@highwaysengland.co.uk
Telephone: 0300 123 5000

Local Taxi Service – Jennie’s Taxis

Telephone: +44 7967 766 970

Newbury Ambulance Station

Address: Hawthorn Rd, Newbury RG14 1LD
Telephone: 01869 365000

Newbury Fire Station

Address: Hawthorn Rd, Newbury RG14 1LD
Telephone: 0118 945 2888

Thames Valley Police

Address: 12 Mill Ln, Newbury RG14 5QU
Telephone: 01865 841148

Thames Water

Sewer flooding reporting questionnaire:
<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/help/emergencies/flooding>
Drain flooding reporting telephone: 0800 316 9800

West Berkshire Community Hospital

Address: West Berkshire Community Hospital, Benham Hill, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG18 3AS
Email: PIPenquiries@berkshire.nhs.uk
Telephone: 01635 273300
Website: <https://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/how-to-find-us/west-berkshire-community-hospital.htm>

West Berkshire Council’s Emergency Planning Team

Email: emergencyplanning@westberks.gov.uk
Telephone: 01635 503535