

Shoreham's path to flood readiness

Lesley Spence is a Shoreham Parish Councillor, resident of the village and a trained flood warden. Here she gives her account of the villages' journey to becoming flood ready.

Shoreham village in the Darent Valley is the second most desirable village in Kent to live in (Times, March 2017) except if you are trying to park your car or get household insurance to cover flooding!

It is a tight knit community of about 2,000 residents. Whilst there is always a changing population, we also have a core of families who have lived in the village for generations. It is their local knowledge and experience that we turn to when disaster strikes or threatens.

"Its local knowledge and experience that we turn to when disaster strikes or threatens"



Lesley with her Flood Warden Emergency backpack

These folk remember the floods of the 1950/60's, they remember being snowed in during the 1980's and their experience was valued following the great storm of 1987. The Historical Society and Shoreham Society has an archive of photographic evidence.



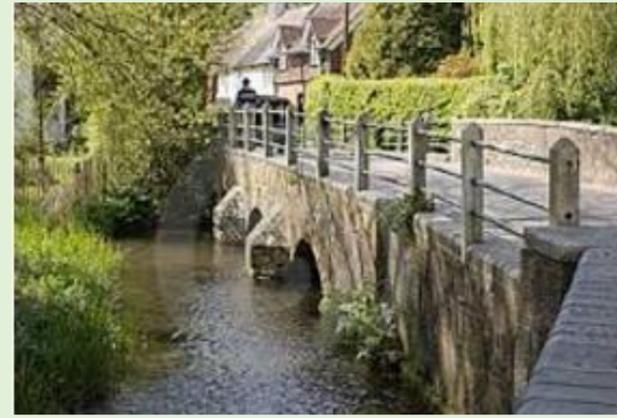
What can you do?

- Call Floodline on 0345 099 1188 and sign up for flood warnings
- Prepare a flood plan for your property
- Investigate property flood protection
- Consider volunteering to be a flood warden
- Attend village flood meetings
- Visit gov.uk to check river levels, live flood map and weather warnings



Leat Cottage in the floods of 2014

Flood fact
One third of the village is built on the river's natural flood plain



Shoreham floods of 1958



"Encouraging a local commitment to a mutually beneficial partnership"

Shoreham Parish Council took on board the need to have an Emergency Response Plan in place which would cover flooding and the need to formalise this was prompted by the 2013/14 storms and flood threat.

Following attendance at a Flood Seminar in November 2016, we gratefully accepted the offer from the Kent Resilience Team and the Environment Agency to receive local training for Flood Wardens.

Our local training was attended by 33 people from several different villages and as a result Shoreham alone now has 15 Flood Wardens in the village.

"The training was arranged for a time that suited us and was delivered smoothly and efficiently".

The fact that we had such a good take up was due to the skill and style of the trainers in encouraging a local commitment to a mutually beneficial partnership.

We now have the confidence to develop our plan with a group of wardens who share a core knowledge base. Although the training was advertised through the expected

channels: parish council website, village Facebook page, local notices etc. the excellent attendance was achieved more by actually knocking on doors or asking people in the street to come!

Flood fact
Shoreham has flooded multiple times in the past 100 years

Kent Prepared Kent County Council Environment Agency
Working in partnership to build resilient communities

Our next steps will be:

- To work with the Environment Agency to expand and fine tune our Flood Plan
- To participate in a Table Top scenario so that we are confident we know what to do
- To identify any weaknesses and address them
- To list properties in the area most likely to flood and divide these into small groups that individual Flood Wardens can engage with to encourage residents there to make their individual flood plans
- To encourage those residents in vulnerable properties to purchase the defence materials that might save their homes

Visit www.kentprepared.org.uk for more information



Shoreham floods of 1958