

Winter Floods & Storms 2013/2014

FINAL DEBRIEF REPORT

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West Berkshire
C O U N C I L

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Executive Overview & Summary

The adverse weather over the winter of 2013/14 tested the Council, other responders and the community not only because of the effect and impact of the storms and flooding but the longevity of the event over a 5 month period.

The impact was extensive not only in time but in relation to the geographic area of West Berkshire affected; the resources required by a significant number of agencies; the national media coverage that was surrounding the issues not only in this area but in the whole country including significantly the Somerset levels and the East Coast 'tidal' event which had the knock on effect of the Government being involved.

After any such event the communities affected often ask why? How did it happen? What could have been done to prevent it? and What is going to be done to prevent it happening in the future?

After any major event it is important to look at what went well and what could be improved therefore in order to help answer some of the communities questions and to consider improvements for the future a debrief was carried out.

This report therefore provides details about the event, how it built up, the impact on communities and the Council, the management of the event and provides recommendations in relation to what can be done by way of prevention, reducing the risk for the future and suggested improvements for the management and coordination for the future. These improvements and actions are not only referring to recommendations that West Berkshire Council should consider implementing but also other responding agencies, the Government and the residents and communities themselves.

Throughout the report there are details of good practice and positive actions which should not be overlooked.

A further report has being prepared by Highways and Transport Service as required under the Section 19 of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010. This has being prepared alongside this report to provide more details with respect to what caused specific properties and areas to flood.

Care needs to be taken not to only focus on what could be improved. Throughout this process there have been examples of really good work by the Council and others involved, excellent cooperation and working together, the development of new practices and really good community engagement.

There is no doubt the incident challenged everyone but from a Council point of view those involved embraced the challenge and worked with the sole purpose of helping the communities most in need.

The conclusion reached following this extensive review is that whilst there are areas of improvement to be made they are relatively minor and did not significantly adversely affect the Council's response. Indeed the positive feedback from other professional partners, the staff involved and the communities themselves are key messages to take away particularly due to the pressure everyone was working under.

There are also areas of improvement for other agencies and indeed the communities to act upon to reduce the risk of them being affected so significantly in the future.

The final approved recommendations will now be taken forward over the following weeks, months and years in order to ensure the continual improvement and service the council aims to provide to the community at the time they need support the most.

Section 1 - Overview of Debrief Process

This section provides an overview into the debrief aims, objectives and process.

Debrief Background

- 1.1 Following any major incident debriefing should be carried out in order to identify lessons for the future. These debriefs can be undertaken at local Council level, Thames Valley or even at a National level depending on the severity and impact of the incident.
- 1.2 For the flooding in 2013/14 there have been a number of debriefs undertaken including:
 - (i) Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (TV LRF).
 - (ii) Berkshire Resilience Group (BRG)
 - (ii) Paul Netherton (ACC Devon and Cornwall) coordinated feedback from Local Resilience Fora, (LRF) Strategic Coordinating Centre Chairs to consider the National perspective of those affected.
 - (iii) A Ministerial Recovery Group (led by Brandon Lewis from Dept of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)) focused on the immediate issues surrounding recovery from recent events.
 - (iv) A special cabinet committee on recovery, reviewing the longer term issues for flood prevention and response.
 - (v) Somerset Levels and Moors & Lincolnshire LRF Tidal Surge reports.

There is not expected to be a 'Pitt¹' style investigation but this cannot be ruled out.
- 1.3 West Berkshire Council has undertaken a debriefing process which has been split into 2 parts. The first focused on the response and recovery processes including the coordination of both from the start of the flooding through to the end of recovery. The second part focused on the technical reasons why properties flooded or nearly flooded – this is also a requirement under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010² and has been led by the Highways & Transport Service.
- 1.4 The aim and objectives of the debrief process were:

AIM:

What could be done differently if a major incident happened again (not just flooding).

OBJECTIVES:

 - (a) Confirm what happened and why.
 - (b) Establish what went well and what could have been done better
 - (c) Develop an action plan of improvements

¹ [The Pitt Review](#)

² [Flood and Water Management Act 2010](#)

Debrief Process

- 1.5 In order to achieve a thorough review a number of review/debrief methods were used in an attempt to capture as much information as possible which are set out below:
- (a) Five Online Surveys (using the Website on-line Survey Monkey) to be completed by:
 - (i) Residents – Website on-line surveys and hard copies sent to properties believed to be flooded.
 - (ii) Businesses – Website on-line and hard copies sent to properties believed to be flooded.
 - (iii) Professional Partners – direct email to agencies involved in the response and recovery stages.
 - (iv) Flood wardens, Town & Parish Councils and Ward Members – direct email.
 - (v) West Berkshire Council staff – direct email to all staff.
 - (b) Consultation with Local Flood Forums (Lambourn Valley, Pang Valley and Streatley).
 - (c) West Berkshire Council Service area debriefs – internal to each service.
 - (d) West Berkshire Council Emergency Planning Liaison Officer debrief session – providing details of Service debriefs.
 - (e) Review of other agency's and flooded area debrief reports where provided.
 - (f) Feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission.
- 1.6 In developing the different reviews, consultations and debriefs a number of themes were initially identified as areas to explore as set out below:
- (a) To understand the risks in West Berkshire to flooding.
 - (b) To review if lessons had been learnt from previous events.
 - (b) To understand the background and therefore cause of the significant flooding in West Berkshire.
 - (c) To clarify the involvement of West Berkshire Council and the impact on services.
 - (d) To establish a greater understanding of the awareness of the residents and businesses in West Berkshire to flooding and potentially other emergencies which may affect them.
 - (e) To understand the resilience of residents, businesses and communities in West Berkshire.
 - (f) To identify whether residents and businesses would like to get more involved in mitigating the impact of flooding and other events in the future.
 - (g) To consider the effectiveness of response and recovery plans.
 - (h) To consider the effectiveness of Command and Control processes – for West Berkshire and for multi-agency environments.

- (i) To consider the joint working of the professional partners involved in the response.
 - (j) To review the effectiveness of communications – internally and externally to the communities and professional partners.
 - (k) To consider the resources used and any weaknesses.
 - (l) To review the process of information sharing by way of specific data (including vulnerable people), information management systems.
- 1.7 This report is set out in the following sections which provide the information to qualify the evidence required to meet the aims and objectives:
- Section 2 Background to flooding in West Berkshire and the learning from previous events.
 - Section 3 Winter 13/14 Adverse Weather Event – the cause & impact.
 - Section 4 Adverse Weather Event Management.
 - Section 5 Consultations, Debriefs and Reviews Analysis.
 - Section 6 Conclusions and Recommendations.
- 1.8 In sections 2, 3 and 4 there are 'Key Points' highlighted which are the authors views both positive and areas concerns which are based on feedback and following consideration of the actions undertaken. In additions in these sections recommendations are highlighted.
- 1.9 It should be noted that whilst this debrief process has been taking place a number of actions have already been initiated.

Section 2 - Background to Adverse Weather esp Flooding in West Berkshire

This section provides details in relation to flooding historically in West Berkshire, flood legislation and learning the lessons from previous events. Information was sourced from the Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Council Officers.

1. Flooding in West Berkshire

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 Like many other areas across the United Kingdom, West Berkshire has experienced serious flooding in recent years. These events have provided first-hand experience of the consequences of flooding and the impact it has on the communities affected which can be far reaching from short duration nuisance flooding of highways, open space and river corridors to flooding of people's homes and businesses leading to property damage, loss of personal possessions, temporary relocation during home repair works and environmental impacts from pollution. The effects of flooding can also lead to both physical and emotional health issues and ongoing anxiety amongst people in flood risk areas.

1.2 Flooding Events in West Berkshire

- 1.2.1 The table below sets out some of the significant flooding events to affect some or all of West Berkshire over the last 100 years.

Year	Event	No of Properties Flooded
1915	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames	
1947	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames	
1974	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames	
1990	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames	
1992	Flooding across district including – Newbury, Thatcham, Aldermaston, Sulhamstead & Pangbourne	
1993	River Pang flooding of Stanford Dingley and Pangbourne and localised flooding along River Enbourne	
1999	River Kennet Flooding of Burghfield and River Pang flooding of Tidmarsh and Pangbourne.	
2003	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames 40 homes flooding in (worst event since 1947)	40
2007	Widespread flooding across district with river and surface water flooding (July 2007)	2500+
2008	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames, Flash flooding in Thatcham – Bowling Green Way, Woolhampton- The Mill Stream overflow	0
2009	The Mill Stream overflow – Woolhampton	

Year	Event	No of Properties Flooded
2010	River Lambourn – Head Waters overflow- Upper Lambourn	
2012	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames	
2012/13	River Kennet flooding of Pingewood, Denford Mill (Hungerford), Marsh Benham and Ufton Lane (Ufton Nervet). River Lambourn and River Pang – via groundwater	~10 homes
2013/14	River Thames – Purely on Thames, Streatley, Pangbourne; River Kennet- Denford, Hampstead Marshall, Newbury, Woolhampton, Theale, Holybrook, Pingewood; River Lambourn – all communities, River Pang – all communities. Mix of fluvial and groundwater flooding for over 4.5 months.	~ 271homes & 35 businesses.

1.3 Adverse Weather

1.3.1 In recent years there have been a number of extreme weather events including two major surface water flood events in the last 10 years. The most significant events included:

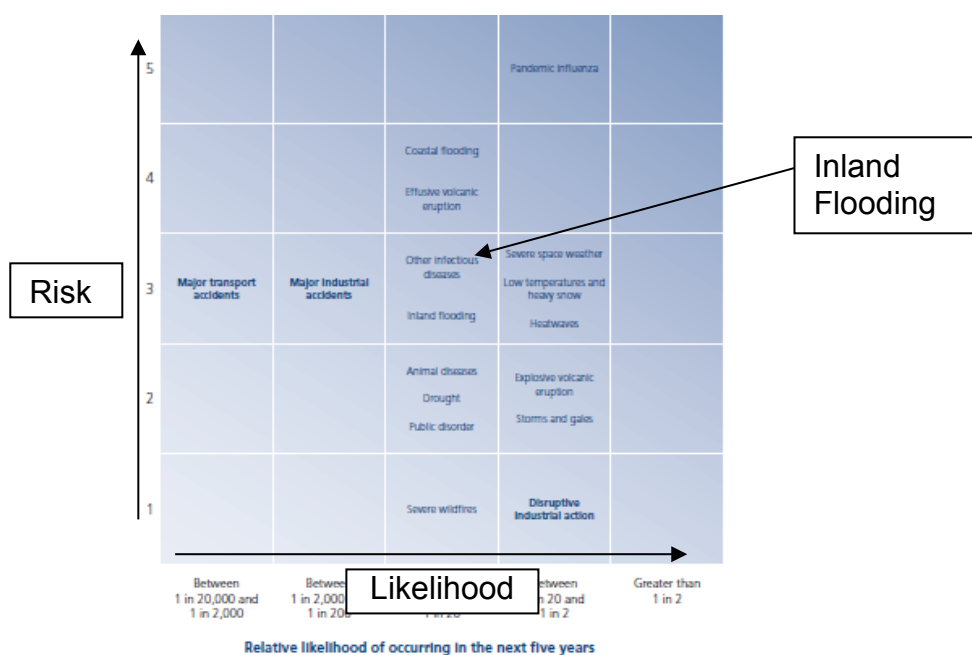
- Flooding in July 2007 and 2008;
- Extreme cold and snow winters in 2009/10 and 2011/12;
- Risk of drought in spring of 2012;
- Flooding in 2012/13 and 2013/14.

1.3.2 These facts along with the details of the Thames Valley LRF Risk Register³ reiterate that Adverse Weather is a Very High risk to the communities of West Berkshire.

1.3.3 Whilst the above points relate to West Berkshire area, nationally it has been noted that extreme weather situations are becoming more frequent across the country with flooding being high on the National Risk Register⁴ developed by the Cabinet Office.

³ <http://www.thamesvalleylrf.org.uk/useful-links/publications/risk-register.ashx>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-risk-register-for-civil-emergencies-2013-edition>



1.3.4 Whilst there is ongoing debate about the causes and impacts of climate change the effects of any climate change are a likely increase in extreme weather and flooding.

1.4 Learning the lessons from previous events

- 1.4.1 Following any major incident, emergencies and some near miss events a debriefing exercise is undertaken in order to identify areas of good practice but also where the response could have been better. These debriefing exercises can be managed by the Council or other agencies. The purpose of these debriefs is not to assign blame but to learn and improve the plans and therefore the response in the future.
- 1.4.2 In recent years reports have been written for a number of events including fires involving gas cylinders; a gas leak which resulted in evacuations; water supply disruption events etc. Whilst these debriefs may be in relation to a specific incident the learning can often be transferred to any incident.
- 1.4.3 It should be noted that these debriefs also include exercises which again can inform improvements.
- 1.4.4 Specifically in relation to flooding there was a major report written in 2007. This review included a national flooding review and a local review undertaken by the Council. The Council's review focused on its own effectiveness with 45 recommendations subsequently being issued. These are set out in **Appendix A** to this report.
- 1.4.5 The Appendix shows that 35 of the actions have been completed and 10 are detailed as 'ongoing'. These ongoing actions mainly reflect the work with communities which could be declared as closed but in effect they are being subsumed into business as usual and ongoing projects.
- 1.4.6 Some specific actions which have resulted from debriefs of flooding and adverse weather include:
 - (a) Development of an Adverse Weather Plan

- (b) Development of Flood Forums – including Lambourn Valley, Pang Valley, Newbury and Thatcham.
- (c) Development of community emergency plans
- (d) Training and Exercising of staff in the plans.

1.4.7 Nationally a major change which came out of the National Pitt review was the development and enactment of the Flood And Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA)⁵

1.4.8 This FMWA places duties on the Local Authorities as Lead Local Flood Authorities (West Berkshire Council) to develop a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. This was developed by the Council in 2013 and was approved by [Executive on 8 May 2014](#). This provides a lot more detail as to the types of flooding, roles and responsibilities in relation to flooding. It also includes an action plan for the Council, professional partners and communities to progress.

Key Point 1:

- Many of the communities in West Berkshire are aware of the risks of adverse weather, particularly flooding, in part due to the frequency of these natural events.
- Many communities have also put in place their own protection measures or process to mitigate the impact of these events.
- Adverse weather is likely to be a continuing risk for the area.
- Action Plans have been developed and implemented arising from previous flooding and other emergencies.

Recommendations:

- (i) In order for communities to prepare better for future flooding in flood risk areas more promotional activity should be carried out.
- (ii) The Council should consider the likelihood of adverse weather continuing as a risk for the area.

⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents>

Section 3 Winter 13/14 Adverse Weather Event & Impact

1. Overview

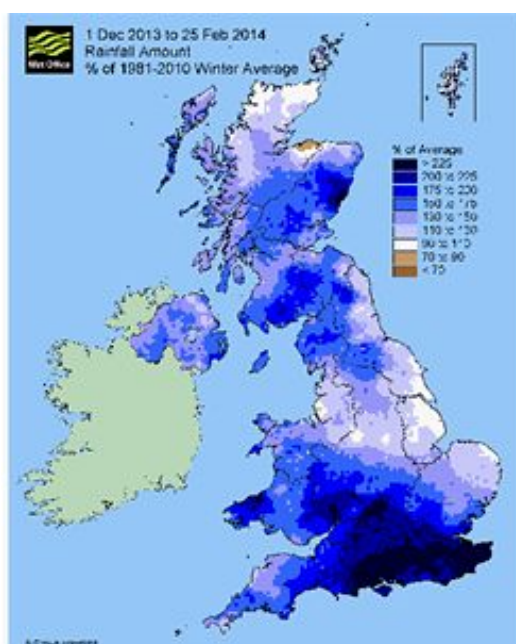
- 1.1 This section provides the details of the events building up to the Major Incident and the impact on the area of West Berkshire. The information was sourced from the log which was recorded throughout the event, a number of professional partners directly, debrief reports and Council Services following their internal debriefs.

2. Background to Adverse Winter Weather Event (13/14)

- 2.1 In order to understand the 13/14 winter adverse weather event it is helpful to understand the background as to how the situation arose in the first instance. This starts with information on the weather conditions.

3. Historical Weather

- 3.1 The Met Office reported at the end of February 2014 that the winter of 2014 in England & Wales was the wettest in 248 years. In addition it was the longest running wet period since 1766 with 435 mm of rain being recorded up to 24th February. This beat the previous record of 423 mm set in 1915. It was also on average 1.5C warmer than the average winter.
- 3.2 The map below shows that in the Berkshire area, like many areas in the South East, there was in excess of 200% to 225% of the average rainfall over the December 2013 to February 2014 period.



Source Met Office

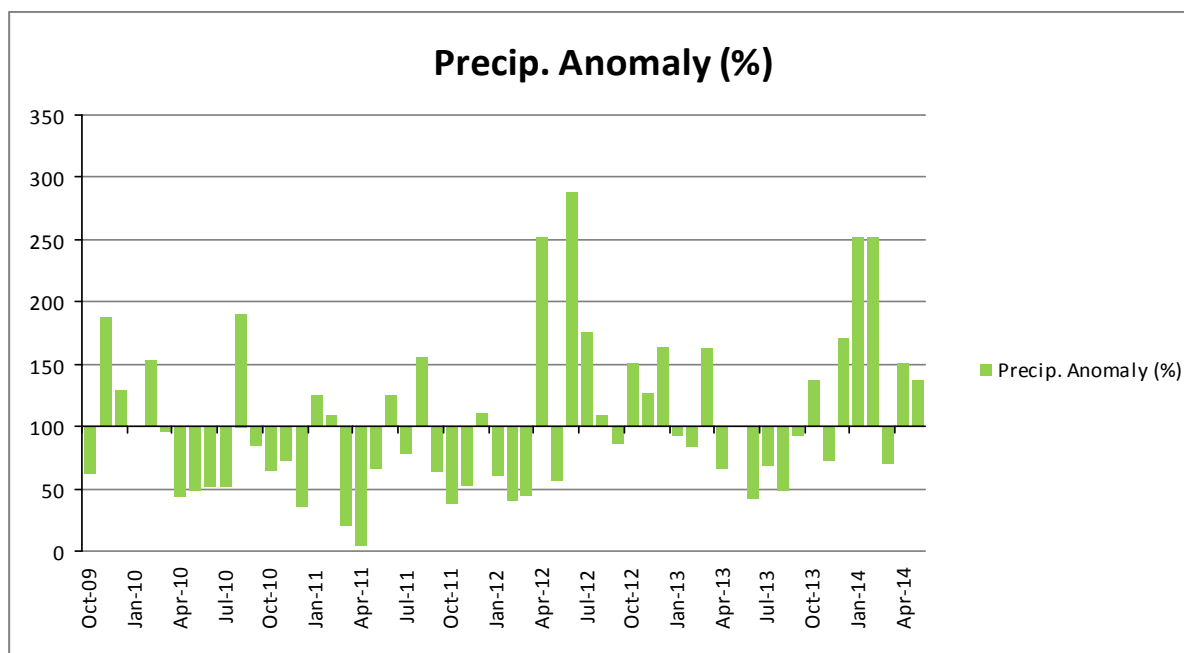
- 3.3 The Met Office have prepared a report providing details as to the facts, figures and implications of the weather events over the 3 months [A global perspective on the recent storms and floods in the UK](#).
- 3.4 The effect of this heavy rainfall was exacerbated due to previous months and years rainfalls as shown in the graphs below.

Source Met Office

The graph for 2012 shows (in red) that England, whilst having a drier than average start to the year, it was a wetter than average spring, summer and winter.

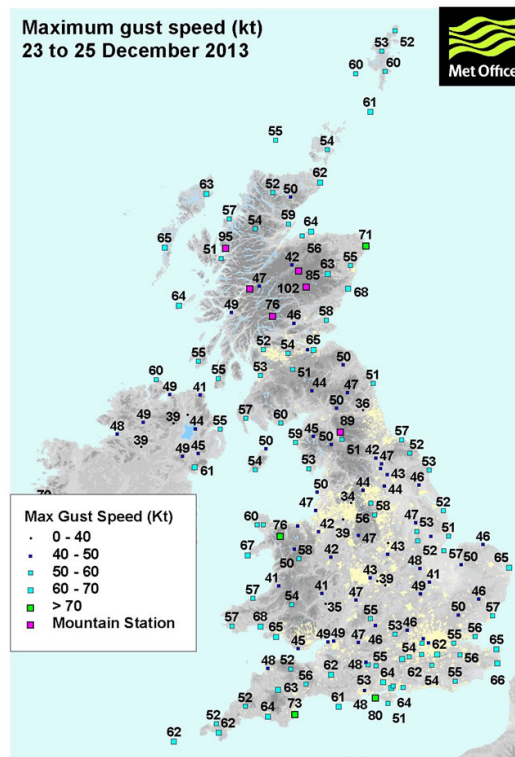
The graph for 13/14 shows a drier than average spring with the exception of May, and an average rainfall in the summer but in October and December 2013 there was higher than average rainfall.

- 3.5 The table below shows the rainfall anomalies for Berkshire over the last 4.5 years. This shows the below average rainfall experienced in 2010 and 2011 and the significantly above average rainfall levels for 2 years from April 2013 to April 2014.



Source: Met Office

- 3.6 In addition to the high rainfall levels the winter of 13/14 also proved to be one of the stormiest winters on record. It began on 28 October 2013 when a fast-moving depression lead to winds of up to 80 mph across SE England. Across the UK from mid December to the end of February 2014 there were 12 major storms.



Source: Met Office

Key Point 2:

- The effects of the previous years higher than average rainfall contributed to the effects experienced in 2013/14.
- The effect of flooding and storms added to the impact on communities and complicated the response.

4. Consequences of Winter Adverse Weather 13/14

4.1 The consequences of the adverse weather across the UK, including West Berkshire were significant and fell into 3 main areas:

- (1) **River Flooding**
- (2) **Groundwater Flooding.**
- (3) **Storm Damage**

4.2 River Flooding

4.2.1 River flooding caused much of the flood damage over the winter regardless of the source of the water into the rivers. The Environment Agency had recognised that in the early autumn due to the dry soils there was a minimal rise in river levels in response to rainfall. However by the end of the autumn the soils were approaching saturation. This however is normal for the time of year and initially gave the Environment Agency little cause for concern. However, as the rainfall continued in December 2013 and January 2014, the situation and concern changed⁶.

4.2.2 River Flood Alerts & Warnings. Between 23 Dec 2013 and 11 June 2014 the Environment Agency issued several Flood Alerts and Flood Warnings⁷ for the West Berkshire area. When the risk of flooding to properties reduced the alerts and warnings were removed, this had the impact of some the alerts and warnings being issued on several occasions for the same stretches of river.

Information relating to these alerts and warnings are set out below:

Fluvial Flood Alerts	12
Fluvial Flood Warnings	17
Fluvial Severe Flood Warnings	0
Longest Period of a Fluvial Flood Alert	156 Days – River Lambourn
Longest Periods for Flood Warnings	30 Days - Lower Kennet, Theale/Holybrook 27 Days- Pang @ Bucklebury 21 Days – Thames @ Purley on Thames
Most Flood Warnings & Alerts in place at one time	The most intense period was from 14 Feb - 17 Feb when: - 3 Flood Fluvial Warning - 7 Flood Fluvial Alerts & - 2 Groundwater Alerts in place ALL Rivers and all sections of the rivers were affected with the risk of flooding to properties.
River Pang	2 Flood Warnings over same period for different sections
River Lambourn	3 Flood Warnings over same period for different sections
River Kennet	3 Flood Warnings, 1 was issued three times for Lower Kennet for different dates. (Dec, Feb and March)
River Thames	7 Flood Warnings Purley Village had Flood Warnings on the area 3 times (Dec, Jan and Feb) Pangbourne & Streatley stretches having Flood Warnings on these areas twice The communities along the River Thames experienced higher than ever recorded flows and the levels remained high for long periods of time. All the tributaries to the Thames were all flowing fast and high for several months.

⁶ Flood Event Report Winter Floods 2013/14 West Thames Area July 14

⁷ Flood Alerts are issued when rivers are expected to overtop their banks, spill out into the floodplain and flood low lying areas, roads and gardens. Flood Warnings are issued when a river impacts areas of land and Property flooding is expected. Severe Flood Warnings should be reserved for exceptional flooding situations where there is significant risk to life or significant disruption to the community.

Key Point 3:

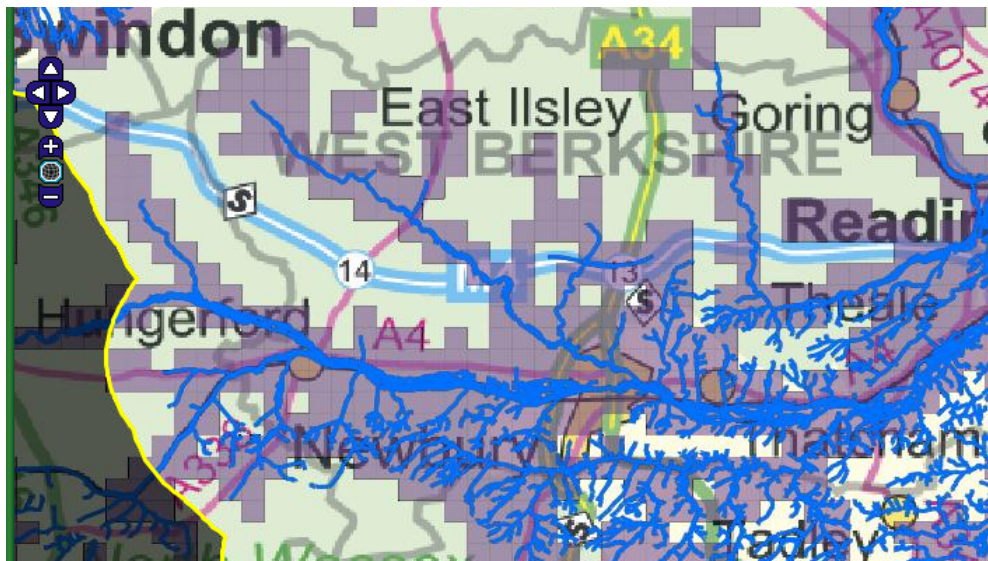
- The number of flood alerts & warnings being put in place over the whole geographic area of West Berkshire was challenging to manage due to the different demands of the situation and the demands being made by communities at risk which was widespread.
- Local knowledge of how the rivers respond and the potential key risk points is essential in any response. This knowledge is held by some WBC staff and the communities.
- Some communities on river systems either were not signed up to alerts from Environment Agency or did not take notice of the actions necessary in good time adding to the impact on the Council and demands being made.

Recommendations:

- (iii) The knowledge relating to rivers and how they respond with key areas of concern should be developed into a plan to prevent single points of failure.
- (iv) In order for individuals and communities to prepare better for future flooding in flood risk areas more promotional activity should be carried out to ensure they are signed up to receive alerts and know what to do when they get them.

4.3 Groundwater

- 4.3.1 West Berkshire, particularly the Downs areas, is an area susceptible to groundwater flooding due to the chalk geology forming aquifers. The map below shows the river systems across the area in blue and in purple squares the areas where groundwater can have an impact.



Source: Env Agency

- 4.3.2 The map shows that a significant area in the District is at risk of groundwater flooding. It should be noted that the Rivers Pang, Lambourn and Kennet are all groundwater fed rivers.
- 4.3.3 The impact of this groundwater can be both positive and negative in that in periods of low rainfall there is an option to abstract water to maintain flows and water provision via the utility companies. However the opposite is not so readily controlled in that following long periods of rainfall the aquifer fills up and is found to 'breakout' at the surface. This can result in flooding and the 'source' of the relevant rivers changing from 'normal' conditions as a result.
- 4.3.4 The impact can be repeated if during the intervening months the rain levels do not allow for the groundwater levels in the aquifer to reduce significantly. This was shown over the last 2 winters following 2 years of high rainfall resulting in 2 years of groundwater breakout and flooding.
- 4.3.5 In order to monitor and forecast the risk of groundwater flooding the Environment Agency has 2 main monitoring points in West Berkshire at the boreholes known as:
Longacre and Northfield Farm – Lambourn Valley catchment
Hodcott – West and East Ilsley and Compton - Pang Valley catchment
- 4.3.6 When the levels get to a certain point then the EA issue groundwater alerts. Below are the dates the alerts were put in place over the last two winters. Interestingly the dates the alerts were removed are very similar.

Lambourn Valley groundwater alert

	2013/14	2012/13
Issued:	09/01/2014	04/12/2012
Removed:	28/05/2014 - 140 days	31/05/2013 – 178 days

West and East Ilsley and Compton groundwater alert

	2013/14	2012/13
Issued:	29/01/2014	02/01/2013
Removed:	28/05/2014 - 120 days	28/05/2013- 147 days

4.3.7 The charts below show the groundwater levels at the 2 bore holes since 2000.

Chart 1 – Lambourn Valley Bore Hole (2000 – 2014)

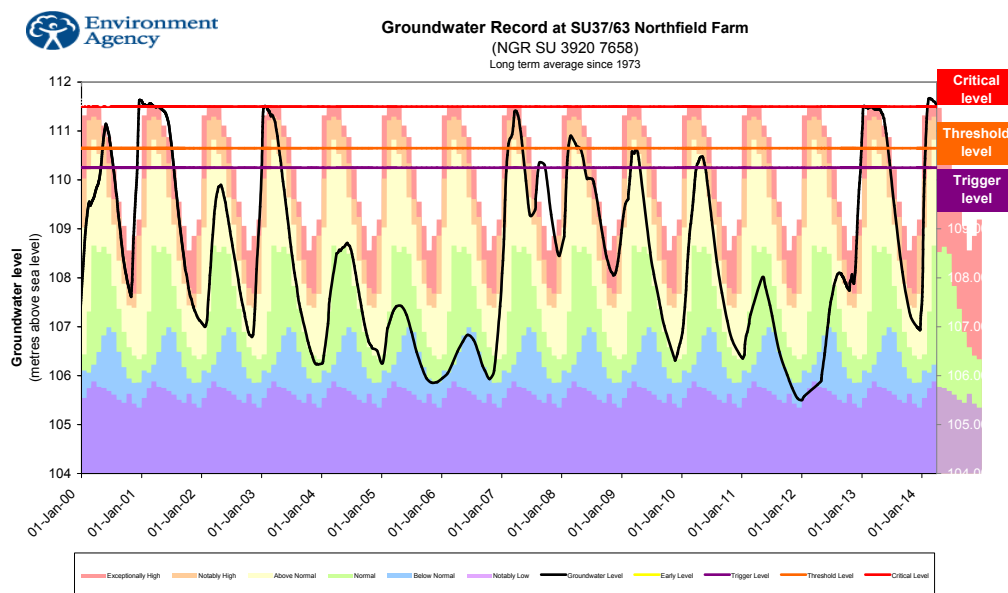
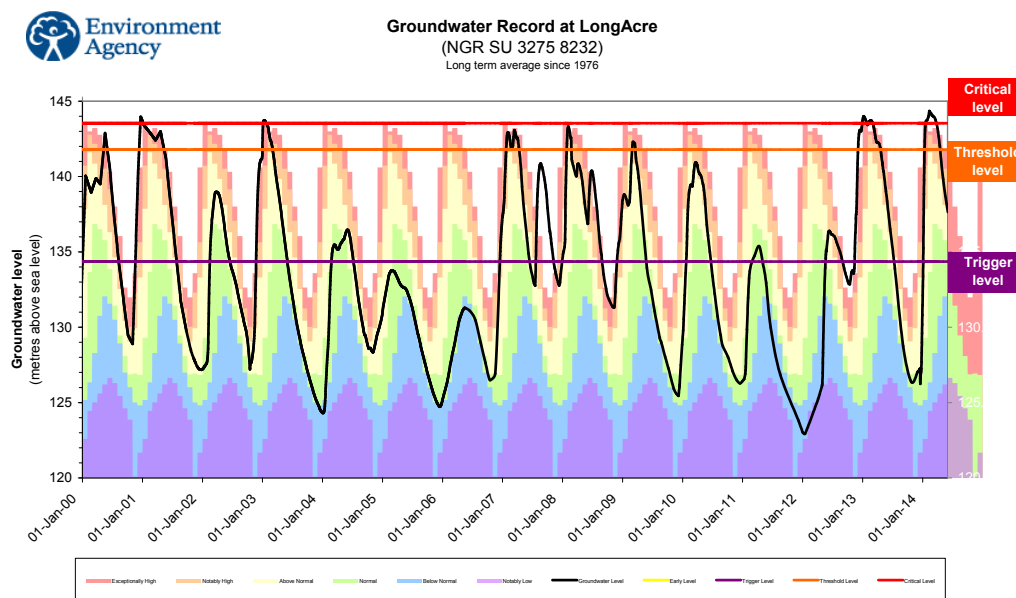


Chart 2 Pang Valley Bore Hole (2000 – 2014)



The charts below show in more detail the g/w levels since Sept 11 to May 2014

Chart 3 Lambourn Valley Bore Hole Chart

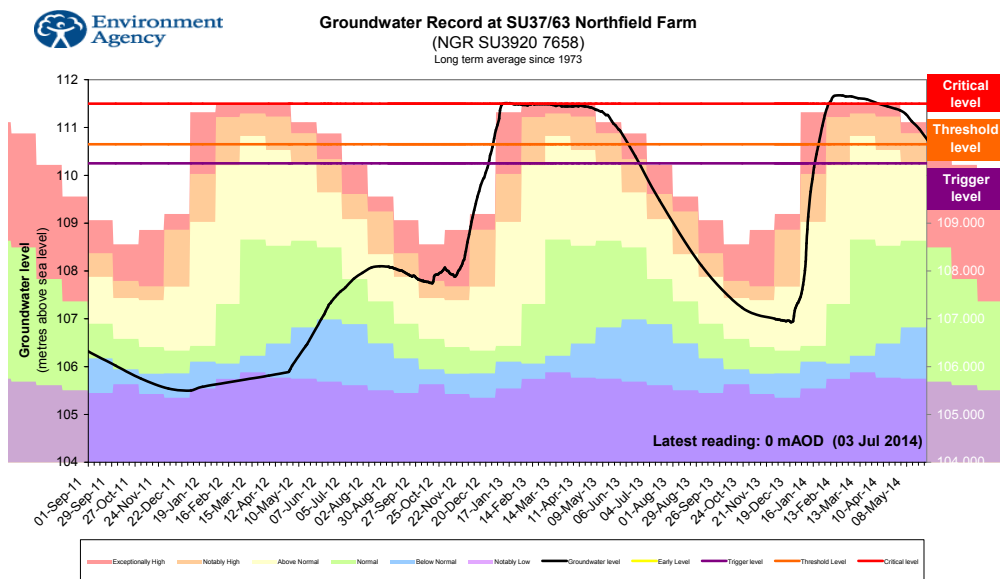
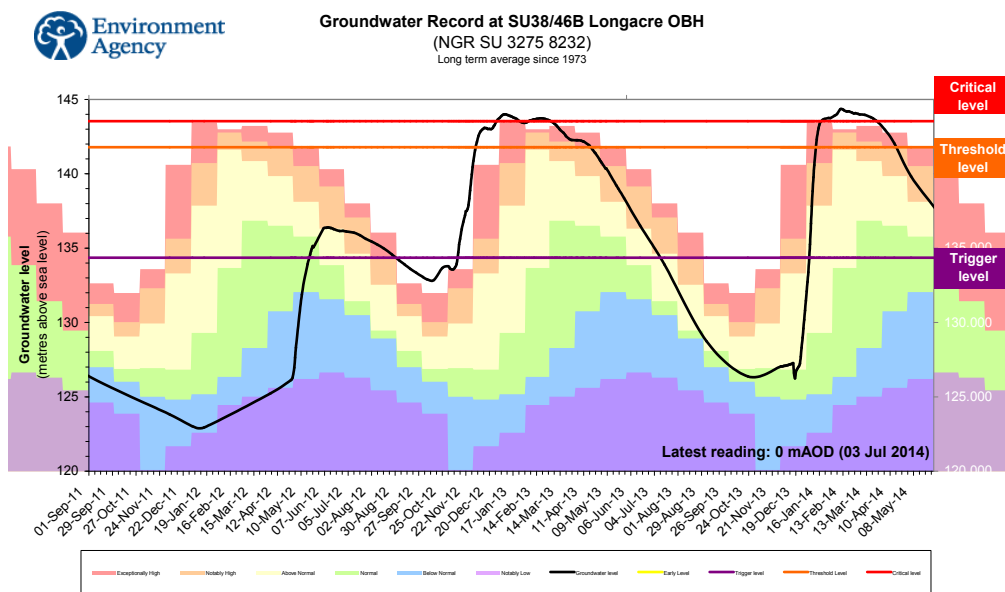


Chart 4 Pang Valley Bore Hole Chart



The above graphs show that in 2012 the groundwater levels did not go as far down as they have in the past, and although during the summer of 2013 the levels reduced more than in 2012 this was not as much as in previous years. This situation led to a risk over both these winters that with normal rainfall there would be some groundwater flooding.

The graphs also show that the levels of groundwater in 13/14 went above the 'critical' levels and therefore it can be assumed this is the reason the impact was greater in 13/14.

Key Point 4:

- Groundwater flooding and river flooding had occurred in the winter of 2012/13.
- The groundwater was significantly higher than normal and did not reduce to a 'normal' starting point for the winter of 2013/14.
- The excessive rainfall in January - February 2014, exacerbated the groundwater levels and, along with river levels increasing too, resulted in significant flooding across West Berkshire.
- In both groundwater alert areas (Lambourn and Pang) the alerts were removed at almost the same time despite being 20 days apart in issuing.
- In 2012/13 the groundwater alerts were in for a longer period of time than in 13/14 although the levels in 13/14 were higher reaching 'critical' levels.
- The impact of the groundwater in 2013/14 was experienced over a wider area of the District than in 2012/13.
- The high groundwater levels and continued high rainfall in January- February 2014 led to significant flooding including problems relating to sewage.
- The draft Groundwater Plan was implemented based on alerts raised by the Environment Agency.
- An early multi-agency response with EA, RBFRS, TW and Council was put in place.

Recommendations:

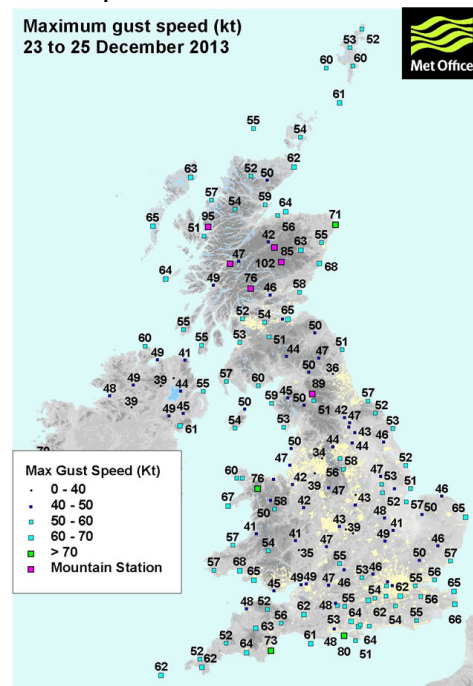
- (v) The adverse weather plan should incorporate more detail on groundwater flooding including:
 - a. An early multi-agency response with EA, RBFRS, TW and Council being put in place.
 - b. Capture the local & officer knowledge in the plan
 - c. Engage with the local community when alerts in place so as to assess the time and location of any 'breakout'.
 - d. Considerations as to where the best deployment of resources should be, made by appropriate agencies and based on evidence.
- (vi) In order for individuals and communities to prepare better for future flooding in flood risk areas more promotional activity should be carried out to ensure they are signed up to receive alerts and know what to do when they get them.

4.4 Storms

- 4.4.1 The impact of the storms across the UK were extensive, including the deaths of four people. There was severe disruption to transport with no trains, disruption on roads and reduced flights and ferries. Thousands of trees came down, some of which fell onto power lines leading to 600,000 homes left without power across the country.
- 4.4.2 The storms had an effect on the south of England and West Berkshire as detailed below:

23 - 28 Dec 2013	Caused widespread flooding across Southern England, causing power cuts, with around 50,000 homes remaining without power through the Christmas period. Rail services were cancelled due to fallen trees or flooding, Gatwick Airport was affected by flooding as were several areas in West Berkshire. Over 3300 properties had power outages in West Berkshire over 5 events including 331 with no power on Christmas Day.
7 - 9 Feb 2014	50mph gusts of wind experienced.
12 Feb 2014	59mph gusts of wind experienced with a roof coming off a block of flats in Oxfordshire and many trees coming down across the Thames Valley
13- 15 Feb 2014	60mph gusts of wind experienced leading to hundreds of trees down; over 22297 properties had power outages in West Berkshire over 3 events. (see also 4.6.4)

- 4.4.3 The effects of these storms were experienced across the whole of the UK as shown by the Met Office map below:



Source Met Office

Key Point 5:

- The widespread nature and length of the storms and adverse weather meant that all utility companies were stretched to capacity.
- The ability of the utility companies to keep their customers up to date became overstretched resulting in an increased number of calls to the Council.
- It was perceived that the Council should have known about power outages and other issues in communities without being informed by the communities.
- Whilst sharing of data relating to vulnerable people was shared the format of that data was not always easy to understand.

Recommendations:

- (vii) Greater information sharing across responding agencies about the issues in the varying communities and the deployment of resources would have helped to avoid duplication and made the response more efficient.
- (viii) Local progress reports from agencies or communities would have helped inform decisions in relation to the deployment of resources.
- (ix) A greater robustness of utility company information systems (Customer Services/Websites) and contact centres would assist with the customer management.
- (x) A shared, agreed protocol with respect to information on vulnerable people should be reviewed taking into account the sharing of data, the format of the data and the destruction after the incident of the data.

4.5 Impacts of the Adverse Weather on Communities

The impacts of the adverse weather on the communities detailed below were sourced from the log or reported directly by officers working in the communities.

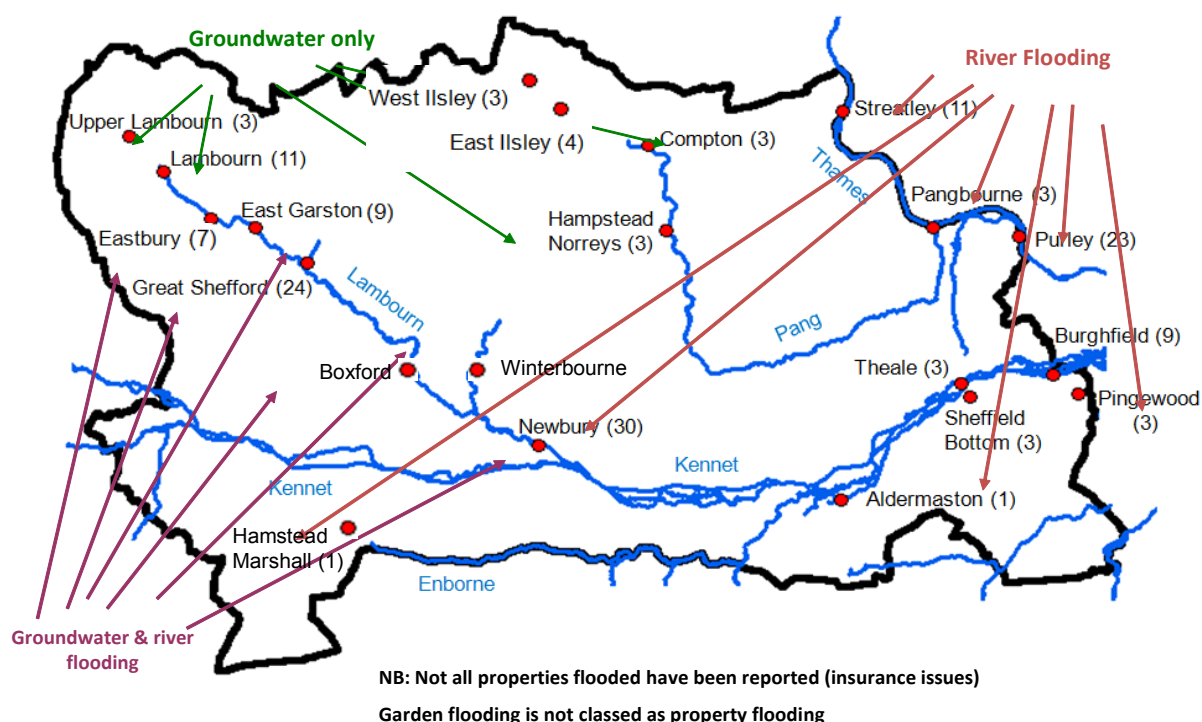
4.5.1 Flooded Properties

During the period 23 December 2013 to 11 June 2014 a number of commercial and residential properties were subject to varying degrees of flooding. In some cases particularly, in Purley on Thames, Theale, Pingewood and Holybrook areas, properties flooded at least twice if not three times as a result of the fluctuating levels of the rivers.

The Section 19, FWMA investigations prepared by the Highways and Transport Service provide details of the reasons why properties flooded. [S19 Flood Reports](#)

The exact number of properties flooded internally in the living or working spaces of dwellings and commercial premises is unlikely to be known in exact detail due to homeowners not making insurance claims and possibly 'blighting' their property in the event of them wishing to sell their properties in the future etc.

The map below shows the location of some of the flooded properties and the cause of the flooding in the area. Note not all flooded properties are identified on this map due to detail.



The information on flooded properties as at 11 June 2014 is:

- ~ 250 Residential properties
- ~ 35 Commercial properties

This compares with the National Figures as at June 2014 which were:

Numbers of households flooded – where water has entered the property since 5 December 2013	7,744
Numbers of businesses affected (including farms	3,217

Based on 122 Local Authority returns therefore an average of 64 residential properties per Local Authority. (Source DCLG)

The impact on those directly affected by being flooded cannot be underestimated regardless of the source of the flooding. Not only in terms of finances in the short term but potentially the long term by not being able to sell their property and higher, insurance premiums. The loss of personal belongings can also be traumatic especially if they cannot be replaced. The psychological effects caused by flooding can also impact on families and can be triggered by families having to move out and away from their home, the community, the work place and school. Families may also be required to live upstairs as repairs take place and this can have a negative impact on everyday life.

Key Point 6:

- Establishing a full picture of the actual number of premises impacted by flooding is difficult if not impossible due to the homeowners concerns about “blighting” their properties.
- Communities across West Berkshire will be impacted differently depending on the nature of the flooding.
- The impact on individuals who have gone through this crisis cannot be underestimated.
- The impact on the West Berkshire area was significant in relation to across the UK as a whole.

4.5.2 Stranded Communities

The overall number of properties flooded over the winter period was significantly lower than in 2007 when over 2500 homes were flooded. However in 2013/14 a far greater number of properties were surrounded by water although not flooding internally in the living space, some were surrounded and therefore ‘cut-off’ for a significant period of time. Some areas where this was evident included:

- (a) Purley on Thames
- (b) Eastbury, East Garston & Great Shefford
- (c) Pingewood

- (d) Burghfield Bridge, Holybrook
- (e) Shaw, Newbury

In these areas the water was lapping all around the house, was often below floor level and in their gardens but not necessarily in the living area.

A significant number of other areas almost became cut off due to the flooding on the road network resulting in a large number of roads being closed. Some communities that were affected or were at risk included:

- (a) Two Rivers Way, Newbury
- (b) Kintbury
- (c) Aldermaston
- (d) Tidmarsh
- (e) East Ilsley
- (f) West Ilsley
- (g) Sulham
- (h) Great Shefford
- (i) Pingewood
- (j) Burghfield/Theale

The impact of these road closures on communities was significant due to:

- (a) Difficulties of getting in and out of homes,
- (b) Feeling of isolation,
- (c) Worrying about the levels of water getting into the house and the long term impact on the house structure,
- (d) Concerns about the contamination risks of the water,
- (e) Infiltration of the water into mains or private sewers,
- (f) Long term business impacts due to lack of access by customers

Key Point 7:

- Properties which are cut off but not flooded still pose a significant challenge for responding agencies.
- Homeowners cut off but not flooded still suffer from extreme anxiety when surrounded by water.
- Access for emergency services was also limited

4.5.3 Damage to Farm Land

The flood damage to land, in particular farm land, in the area was wide spread over the 4.5 month period.

Damage to land and soil structure from erosion and compaction was common on flooded land and would require remedial treatment with subsoiling in the spring or autumn before the next crop is planted.

Damage to crops varied depending on the duration of the flooding. In general arable crops which flooded for more than two weeks were unviable; however grassland often survived longer periods of flooding. There were instances of crop losses of field beans, oilseed rape and cereals; however most were redrilled with spring sown crops which mitigated the losses. Groundwater was an issue and caused soil erosion and crop losses in affected areas, although these were not widespread.

(Source ADAS)

Key Point 8:

- The impact on the rural economy whilst significant at the time had an opportunity to recover in terms of land use and finances.

4.5.4 Power Failures

Power failures due to power lines being damaged during storms were experienced throughout the winter period however the most significant periods for West Berkshire were on 23/28 December 2013 and 13/15 Feb 2014. During this period Scottish & Southern Electricity (SSE) received over 1000 reports of damage to the Southern Electricity Power Distribution (SEPD) network impacting over 180,000 customers across the country over the course of Christmas week.

In West Berkshire the following power outages were experienced:

Date	No out of power (new on that date)	Main areas affected	Return to normality
23 Dec	1174	Woodhays, Enborne, Hamstead Marshall, Brimpton, Crookham	9850 out of power for over 6hrs 2115 out of power for over 12hrs 1034 out of power for 24hrs 309 out of power for 36hrs
24 Dec	547		22 out of power for 36hrs
26 Dec	445		19 were still without power 36hrs later
27 Dec	978		All back on power between 12 – 24hrs
28 Dec	156		All were back on within 6hrs
13 Feb	421	Mortimer	All within 6hrs
14 Feb	5551	Thatcham, Crookham, Greenham, Leckhampstead, Chaddleworth, East Ilsley, Eastbury, South Fawley, Great Shefford, Lambourn, East Garston	476 had power in less than 6hrs 663 had power in over 6hrs 3117 were still without power some 48hrs later

Date	No out of power (new on that date)	Main areas affected	Return to normality
15 Feb	16325	Kintbury, East Ilsley, Basildon, Denford, Lower Basildon, Streatley, Wickham, Lambourn	8798 were still without power over 6hrs later 1307 were without power 12hrs later and 54 were without power 24hrs later

There were other dates over the winter where power outages were issues including 27 – 29 Oct (total 4306 without power). However the main impact of power outages in relation to the dates in the table including the knock on effect for those communities at risk of flooding and a significant number of residents without power over Christmas Day.

The impact of the power being off included the ‘normal’ lack of power issues:

- (a) No heating – a significant issue for vulnerable
- (b) No means of cooking
- (c) Many modern systems including phones, internet etc need power to operate

Furthermore, many generators used to pump water out or away from homes were electrical. There were unable to be used due to losing power.

Key Point 9:

- Information about power outages was difficult to access and this had an impact on the deployment of resources.
- The SSE website was not fully operational over the period of the outages.
- Establishing a definitive list of all people who were vulnerable from SSE, WBC and other agencies lists is important and needs greater information sharing to take place.
- Excellent community spirit was in evidence with many people helping out their immediate neighbours. Local Public Houses and the Military also provided hot food, drinks and warmth for those affected.
- The time of year has a major impact on the expectations of residents – i.e. Christmas and winter.

Recommendations: as per previous recommendations

4.5.5 Fallen Trees

During the winter period 179 trees/shrubs were reported to the Council to have fallen. Many more had fallen but were on private land.

The majority of the trees reported were as a result of them falling over roads or footpaths resulting in a risk to the public if they were not cleared.

Some fallen trees and tree debris created secondary issues by taking down power lines; falling into rivers or trash screens and therefore restricting the flow of water.

Key Point 10:

- Whilst a large number of trees/shrubs were reported these were cleared from the road network quickly in a coordinated way by the relevant contractors and in some cases community support.

4.5.6 Damaged to Roads

During the floods (for the purpose of this report from 1 December 2013 – 31 May 2014) the reported damage impact on the Highways network included:

- (a) 22 Road Closures
- (b) 2 Underpass Closures (Newbury)
- (c) Damage across the district to the road surface including 33,919m (33km) of road surface made up of damage to the infrastructure generally and over 578 potholes.
- (d) Over 100 additional 'flood' signs had to be sourced due to the number of flood risks on roads across the district area.

The impact on the community in relation to the closures at the time of the incident meant that some communities or parts of communities were isolated. There was also the issue of people driving through flood water too quickly putting themselves at risk and causing bow waves which was adding to the flood risk to properties.

There was also the knock on effect to Thames Valley Police (TVP) & Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service (RBFRS) due to people ignoring the road closures or removing the signage, not putting it back and then drivers behind being caught in flood water. This resulted in a number of cars being stranded and the emergency services being called upon to rescue them. The outcome was additional resources being supplied to bolster some road closures by way of 'hard' closures or additional resources by way of police staff.

There was also the impact in relation to insurance claims to the Council in relation to damage caused during the floods.

The details below show the claims numbers in relation to potholes etc. It should be noted there has been a reduction – in part since cold, ice and snow has more of an effect on the roads than flooding only which was the main cause of road damage in 2013/14.

1/11/12 – 31/7/13 400 claims

1/11/13 – 28/7/14 218 claims

Key Point 11:

- The expectation of the public is that repairs to roads will be undertaken immediately even when they are still under water.
- Drivers were ignoring road closures or removing road closures causing a risk to themselves and others and additional strain on emergency services.
- The road closures added to the isolation experienced by some communities.

Recommendations:

- (xi) The publicity of road closures including the associated risks of driving through flood water needs to be improved.
- (xii) Investigations to be made as to whether a driver deliberately entering flood water/road closure will invalidate their insurance.
- (xiii) The details of road closures and flooded roads to be reviewed and consideration given as to how these roads can be kept open in full or part by engineering, barriers to the flood water, traffic control etc.
- (xiv) The Councils Communications in relation to where road closures etc are in place should be investigated and improved.

4.5.7 Damage to Public Rights of Way

The effects of the flooding on the Public Rights of Way (PROW) took some time to be determined since it was only when the weather improved and people used some of the footpaths that the full extent of damage was identified.

During the flooding period 51 PROW were formally closed due to the risk to users. In Oxfordshire 2 people died directly as a result of using flooded PROW despite signs advising to the contrary. This was also an ongoing problem in West Berkshire with people removing the tape & barriers to continue to use the paths.

It has been estimated that approx 2045m of PROW was damaged by the floods. Whilst this may be relatively small in the total length of PROW in West Berkshire (1173km) it should be noted that for one length of PROW of only 600m at Streatley Footpath 25 the cost for repair is estimated to be hundreds of thousands of pounds.

All of the PROW in West Berkshire have been visited and reopened although some repairs are still outstanding. The effect on the area and potentially to tourism was significant.

Some of the damage was as a result of flooding directly with other damage on the PROWs reported due to trees being damaged and adversely affecting the PROW. Between 23 December 2013 and 30 May 2014 130 reports were received in relation to trees damaging PROW.

Key Point 12:

- The effects of the damage to PROW are not immediately evident and can take time to establish.

Recommendations:

- (xv) The Councils Communications in relation to where road closures etc are in place should be investigated and improved.
- (xvi) Further work is needed to deter members of the public from ignoring closure signs and the potential dangers of taking this course of action.
- (xvii) The publicity of road closures including the associated risks of driving through flood water needs to be improved.

4.5.8 Damage to West Berkshire Council Buildings

No major flood or storm damage occurred to West Berkshire Council buildings however there were some minor issues including:

- 5 x roof leaks internally at schools
- 1 x power cut at a school
- 2 x near misses to flood damage averted by sandbags
- 1 x near miss at a Care Home –averted by sandbags and an Evacuation Plan on standby
- Newbury Library was damaged by winds on Friday 14th February with slates being blown off the roof. This resulted in closure of the library from Saturday 15th to Thursday 20th inclusive, and a one day closure on Friday 28th while repairs were carried out.

Key Point 13:

- When weather alerts are issued, as part of the Adverse Weather Plan, all services are alerted and those responsible for Council buildings are able to put checks in place to mitigate the risk of damage. This appeared to have been effective.

4.5.9 Damage to Other Infrastructure**4.5.9.1 Sewer Systems**

The Thames Water sewer infrastructure experienced difficulties over the winter months mainly due to groundwater infiltration of their systems. This meant that many sewers were full to capacity and overflowing out of manholes or on occasions

into peoples' homes. This was despite the majority of the sewage treatment and pumping stations operating well beyond their designed capabilities.

The knock on effects of this on the community included:

- (a) Sewage surcharging from manholes.
- (b) Sewage surcharging in homes.
- (c) Sewage contamination of gardens, roads and footpaths.
- (d) Reduced or no ability to use the waste systems in homes.
- (e) Portaloos (provided by West Berkshire Council) being supplied to West Ilsley, Eastbury, Great Shefford, East Garston, Hampstead Norreys and Shaw.
- (f) People using camping toilets.
- (g) Concerns about contamination of the area – the roads, the rivers, homes.
- (h) Concerns about increased risk of disease as a result of the above to humans and animals.

Key Point 14:

- Residents and communities were confused about agency responsibilities and this meant that many contacted the Council looking for a response to Thames Water Sewage related issues.
- There was a lack of clarity as to who was responsible for provision of portaloos and support to the communities. Thames Water made a decision not to provide portaloos whereas Southern Water did.
- Clearer messages were required about the risks that sewage presented to health.

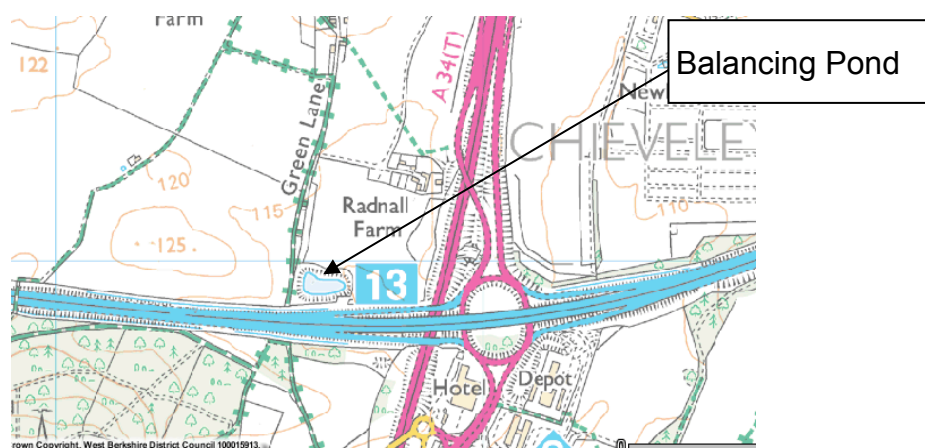
Recommendations:

- (xviii) Promotional work is necessary to encourage individuals to contact the correct agency for the relevant problem.
- (xix) Investigations should be undertaken as to the legal responsibility to take away waste water and support communities if the waste system is ineffective.
- (xx) Public Health England should prepare in advance clearer advice and information in relation to flood waters to cover rural locations, open rivers and potential contamination with raw sewage.

4.5.9.2 Highways Agency Infrastructure

During the flooding in February it was highlighted by the Highways Agency that the balancing pond that receives water pumped from the A34 was very full and at risk of overtopping. In so doing the impact could have been flooding to Chieveley Services area and on the strategic networks of A34 and M4 which would have had a significant impact on the transport network in UK. It was agreed that pumping

should take place but a coordinated multiagency approach was adopted in order to keep network operational and reduce the risk of property flooding.



Key Point 15:

- The early alerting by the Highways Agency of the potential problems associated with the balancing pond meant an early multi-agency joint working approach could be put in place to manage the problem

4.5.9.3 *Electricity Sub Stations and Grid Sites*

There are numerous sub stations and some grid sites within West Berkshire which Scottish & Southern Electricity has to provide the power to all the users in the area.

During the floods & storms some of these were affected directly by being flooded or hit by debris/trees and therefore causing power outages. Some of the most significant power outages were in the areas affected by groundwater. The combination of no power to pump flood water and the electrical pumps not operating meant that the risk of property flooding increased.

A strategic site that was impacted was a Grid Site near Pingewood. This had been affected by flooding in 2012 and had had more resilience measures put in place including alternative means to switch power from to support communities; raising some equipment etc. Other multi-agency support was also put into place to support this site in 2013/14 by way of High Volume Pumps (FRS) and blocking off a breach in the Kennet (Military on behalf of WBC)

Key Point 16:

- Whilst lessons had been learnt by the utility company some of the recommendations of the S19, H&T report of 2013 had not been completed by all agencies especially the Canal and River Trust.
- The engagement work undertaken with SSE following the event in 2012 meant that there was a greater understanding by all of the risks, the impact and what could be done to prevent the site being lost which could have a significant effect on the power supply to the East of West Berkshire area and significant areas of Reading.

4.5.9.4 ***Railway Services***

The station at Newbury was affected by flooding due to 2 issues:

- (a) Flooding on the lines – along the network from Paddington to the west of the area.
- (b) Flooding of the Southern platform due to water and sewage running on to it – resulting in the platform closing on safety grounds.

The impact of this situation included:

- (a) Reduced services for the company
- (b) Reduced services for the rail users.
- (c) Some users being stranded
- (d) Additional road use

4.5.9.5 ***Underground Infrastructure***

Much of the utilities essential for normal day to day operations are below ground level e.g. communication cables. Therefore the impact of groundwater can have a significant effect on them and therefore have a knock effect on the communities. Part of Great Shefford in March was without landline phones due to the BT infrastructure being affected by groundwater.

Key Point 17:

- A greater understanding of the utilities and transport companies resource locations is required particularly if they are impacted.
- The early joint working by the Council and utilities in relation to a groundwater issue in Newbury allowed for more detailed planning should the situation deteriorate.

Recommendations:

- (xxi) The Adverse Weather Plan should build in this notification process and include an early notification of utility companies for groundwater issues in order that they can monitor and review their equipment.

Section 4 - Adverse Weather Event Management

This section describes the preparations to manage risk, the plans in place, the time line of events, the command and control and how this incident was coordinated from a multi-agency point of view. This information was sourced from Thames Valley LRF, professional partners directly and the Council Services as part of their debrief process.

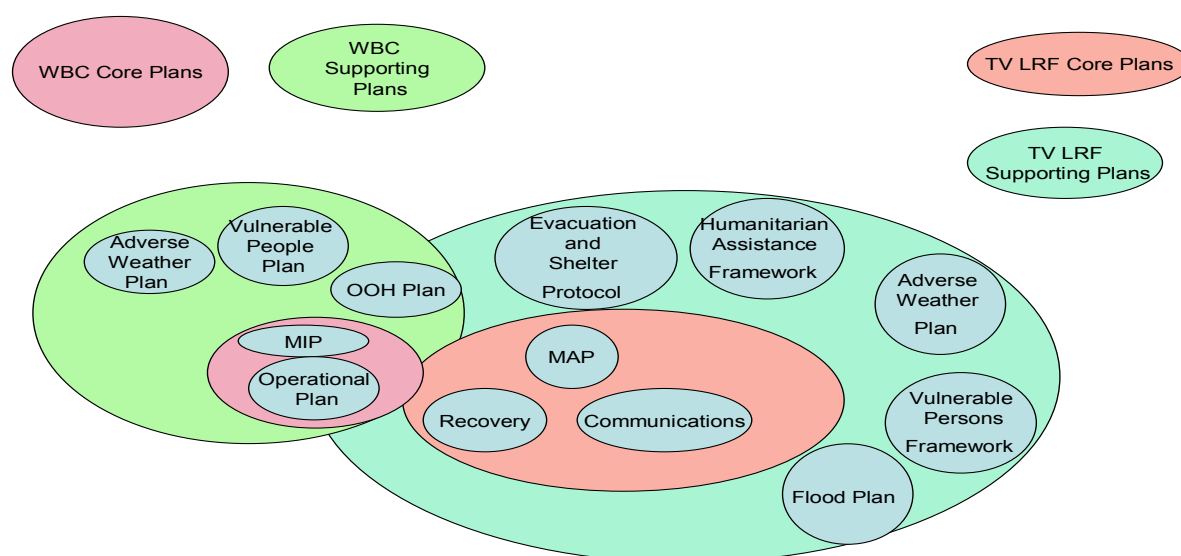
1. Response Preparation

- 1.1 Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004⁸ there are a number of duties placed upon the Council including the need to undertake a risk assessment of the geographic area and to prepare emergency plans.
- 1.2 The National Risk Assessment (NRA) and Local Risk Assessment Guidance (LRAG) is provided by Central Government and provides the national picture on the likelihood of hazards including risks that would be significant at a local but not necessarily at a regional to national level. The assessment of impact is conducted by the Local Resilience Forums
- 1.3 The Assessment of Risks and impacts are carried out annually as part of the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (TVLRF)⁹. Of the 80 identified risks to the communities there are 11 identified in the Thames Valley as being very high. Of these 11 Very High Risks in the Thames Valley, 5 relate to weather, 3 of which relate to flooding risks.
- 1.4 The Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (TV LRF) has recognised that flooding is one of the major concerns for the communities and responding agencies and have a number of plans in place to support the response to such incidents including:
 - (a) TVLRF Multi-Agency Procedures-Emergencies
 - (b) TVLRF Adverse Weather Plan
 - (c) TVLRF Flood Plan
 - (d) TVLRF Evacuation and Shelter Protocol
 - (e) TVLRF Humanitarian Assistance Framework
 - (f) TVLRF Recovery Plan
 - (g) TVLRF Communications Plan
 - (h) TVLRF Vulnerable Persons Framework
 - (i) Environment Agency Flood Warning Plans
 - (j) Environment Agency Local County Flood Warning Plans
 - (k) Environment Agency Incident Management Plans

⁸ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/2004?title=Civil%20Contingencies%20Act%20>

⁹ [Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum -Community Risk Register](#)

- 1.5 West Berkshire Council (WBC) also has a number of plans that support the response and recovery of flooding events including:
- (a) WBC Major Incident Plan
 - (b) WBC Adverse Weather Plan (with storm, heatwave, snow, drought and flooding sections)
 - (c) WBC Operational Guide Plan
 - (d) WBC Out of Hours Plan
 - (e) WBC Vulnerable People Plan
 - (f) Berkshire Local Authorities Memorandum of Understanding
- 1.6 The diagram below shows how the plans link together:



- 1.7 The plans aim to provide an integrated framework as to how all responding agencies will react to an emergency including their roles and responsibilities.
- 1.8 In addition to the agencies plans there are a number of written community emergency or flood plans in place:

Community	Status of plan
Great Shefford	2011
Boxford	2013
Aldermaston	Draft 2013
Bucklebury	2010
Pangbourne	Draft
Theale	2007
Holybrook	2012
Shaw –cum-Donnington	2013
Lambourn	2011
East Garston	2009
Purley on Thames	2013
Thatcham	2009
Sulhamstead	draft
Chieveley	2013

- 1.9 These community plans provide a means for local people to organise themselves, coordinate issues in their communities and improve communications routes between West Berkshire Council and other agencies.

2. Partnerships in place

- 2.1 In order ensure an effective response to a Major Incident then having existing partnerships, knowledge and understanding in place in advance is essential. This has been recognised by the Council and built on over several years. Some of the partnerships and groups in place include:
- (a) Thames Valley LRF (Executive)
 - (b) Thames Valley LRF (Planning & Delivery Group)
 - (c) Thames Valley LRF (Adverse Weather Group)
 - (d) Berkshire LA Emergency Planning Group (LA's only)
 - (e) Berkshire Resilience Group (Multi-agency)
 - (f) West Berkshire Council Emergency Planning Liaison Group (with reps from all Services)
 - (g) West Berkshire Council Flood Group
 - (h) Lambourn Valley Flood Forum
 - (i) Pang Valley Flood Forum
 - (j) Thatcham Flood Forum
 - (k) Newbury Flood Forum
 - (l) Streatley Flood Forum (new since floods)
 - (m) West Berkshire Flood Wardens
- 2.3 The purpose of many of these groups is to coordinate the planning of major incidents, in particular, in developing response plans and training and exercising of these plans in order to develop responders learning. A key element of these activities is meeting other responders and understanding how all agencies can work together in major incident situations.

Key Points 18:

- There are a large number of plans which support a major incident response. These plans are not known or read in detail by most staff in advance.
- The sharing of some plans is limited due to the contact details held within them.
- The work in advance with partners and groups paid dividends during the response and recovery and should be built on.

Recommendations:

- (xxii) Tactical Advisors (TACADS) are recommended to be available at all command and control locations in order to support the decision makers with the details of plans, organisations and communication tools etc. These may be available from other LA's and not only WBC.
- (xxiii) Plans should be reviewed and made available to staff where possible, a smaller Tactical Plan put in place for large plans focusing on West Berkshire key points.

3. Timelines of events

3.1 This adverse weather event was building up for some time as detailed in Section 2.

3.2 The following sets out the outline of actions for this incident.

(a) **Preparations**

This involved reviewing plans following the previous events/incidents; engaging with professional partners and ensuring all the resources (staff and equipment) are prepared.

As a situation occurs either without warning 'big bang' or a 'rising tide' event then more plans are put in place as necessary.

The preparations for this winter included a review of last year's events, amendments to plans etc. In addition there were action plans developed which were being progressed.

As the risk of flooding became more likely at the end of December 2013 more preparation, alerting of services and communities took place.

(b) **Response**

The response to this incident 'started' on 23 December 2013 when the first number of flood alerts and warnings were issued. The following sets out some of the key milestones and actions by the Council in the response process:

Dates	Actions	Plans involved
23 Dec 2013 – 22 Jan 2014	Dialling into the Thames Valley multi-agency teleconferences.	TV LRF Multi Agency Protocol (TV LRF MAP) TV LRF Flood Plan
	Warning and Informing communities via contact (normally by email) with community flood wardens where they are in place; Parish Councils and Ward Members.	WBC Adverse Weather Plan
	Coordinating the local response based on priorities and risk – initially coordinated by Civil Contingencies working extended hours. This involved meetings with relevant services - either by email and/or meetings.	WBC Adverse Weather Plan

Dates	Actions	Plans involved
	Specific teleconferences with EA, Thames Water and the Council when the groundwater alerts were issued.	WBC Draft Groundwater Plan
	Response in relation to specific issues – particularly River Thames and Lower Kennet	WBC Adverse Weather Plan WBC Flood Plan WBC Vulnerable People Plan
1 Feb – 6 Feb 2014	Mini Emergency Operating Centre (EOC) operating and staffed by Civil Contingencies Team and some other officers from other services.	WBC Major Incident Plan
7 Feb 2014	Due to increased issues the team managing the situation needed to expand as the situation was forecast to deteriorate so the group moved to the EOC location in readiness as discussions concerning the situation continued. A multi-service meeting was held to confirm readiness across the Council.	WBC Major Incident Plan WBC Adverse Weather Plan
	As the situation deteriorated with respect to groundwater flooding and the forecast for significant storms in February it was clear that the resources being deployed at that time required support as a result on 7 February 2014 a Major Incident was declared in West Berkshire	WBC Major Incident Plan (WBC MIP)
8 Feb 2014	Strategic Coordinating Centre (SCG) declared Major Incident for Thames Valley Area	TV LRF MAP
7 Feb - 24 Feb 2014	Emergency Operational Centre (EOC) fully operational 24/7 with support from Military & TVP	WBC MIP WBC Operational Manual
14 Feb – 24 Feb 2014	Due to the number of agencies involved in the EOC it was too busy as an EOC due to all the Liaison Officers and the forecast of more storms a WBC Tactical Coordinating Centre (TCC) at WBC Offices stood up formally and staffed from a number of agencies.	TV LRF MAP
19 Feb 2014	Notification by Env Agency of groundwater alert to Newbury	WBC MIP WBC Operational Manual TV LRF Evacuation Plan
24 Feb – 11 Jun 2014	Operating remotely in response to specific flood issues	
21 Feb – ongoing	Staggered recovery process.	TV LRF Recovery Plan

(c) **Recovery**

The recovery phase commenced on 21 February 2014 across the Thames Valley. However in West Berkshire this started in earnest in March 2014 although in some areas, such as Purley on Thames, it was slightly earlier when the risk of flooding was not a risk and the waters had receded.

Key Points 19:

- The Council managed the impact of the early flooding prior to the declaration of a Major Incident. Co-ordination involved a core team of officers working remotely in their own services. At this time some staff and contractors operated for long hours over a prolonged period of time to manage the situation.
- The trigger point for declaring a Major Incident was additional adverse weather due and the assessment of the resources likely to be required over and above those already operating. This included the need for a 24/7 operation EOC.
- Any agency – not just the police can declare a Major Incident.

Recommendations:

- (xxiv) Declaring a Major Incident should be considered using the definition and considering the support likely to be required.

4. Command & Control Arrangements

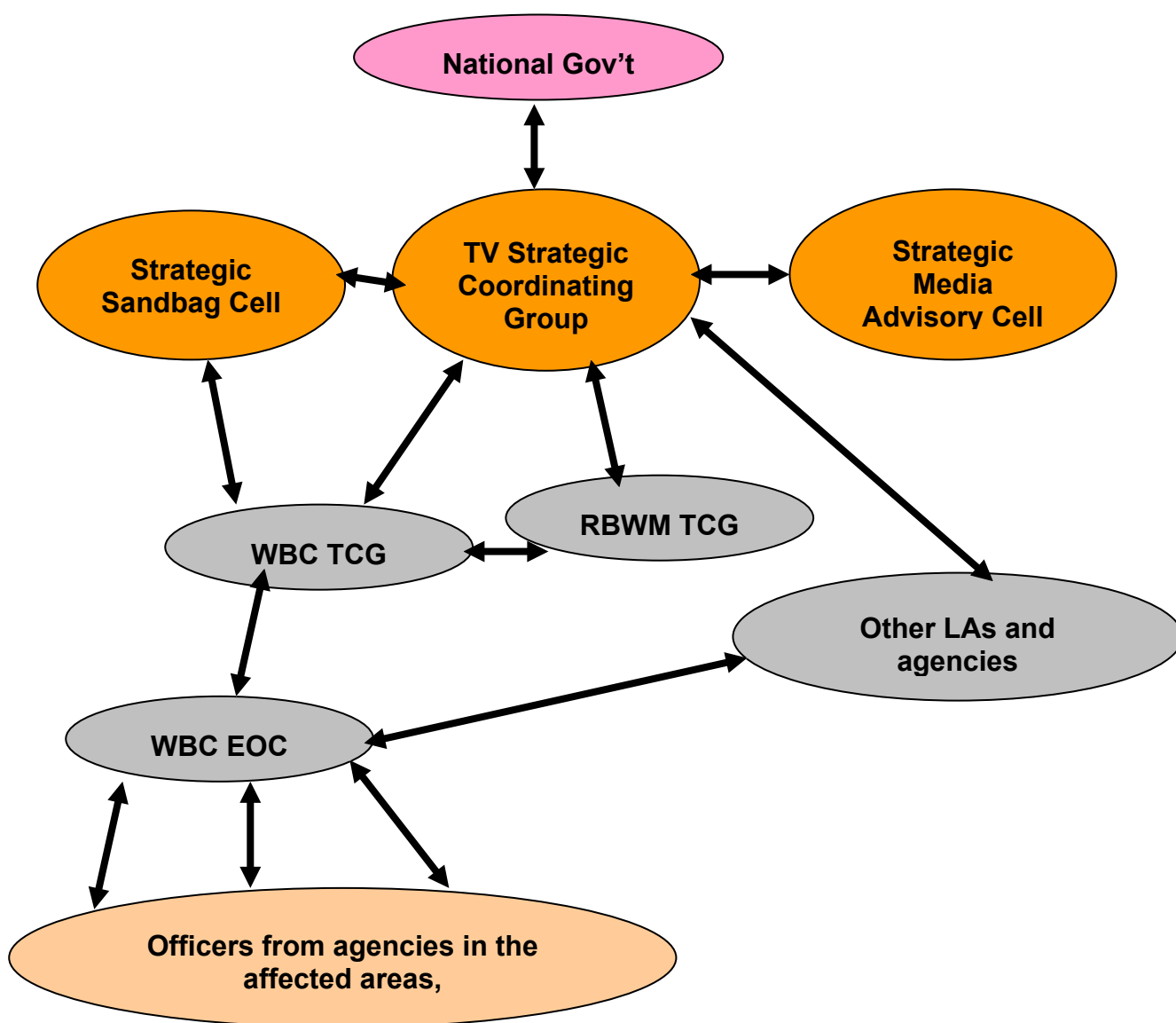
- 4.1 In any emergency the structural arrangements are important in order to ensure everyone knows what is happening, what needs to happen, the priorities and key public messages. The way this was set up for this incident was as follows:

Command & Control Mechanism	Activities and WBC Role
Multi-agency Teleconferences	<p>As per the TV LRF Multi-Agency Procedures and the Adverse Weather Plans Teleconferences are put in place at defined trigger points in order to ensure all agencies are aware of issues etc. There is a process for this including template agendas etc.</p> <p>Initially these were run by the Env Agency however as the situation deteriorated and the Major Incident was declared the role of running the teleconferences was with TVP.</p> <p>These teleconferences ran from 23 December 2013 until end of February 2014, with a small gap in January 2014.</p> <p>There were a number of different telecoms put in place in February 2014 due to the escalation of the situation.</p>

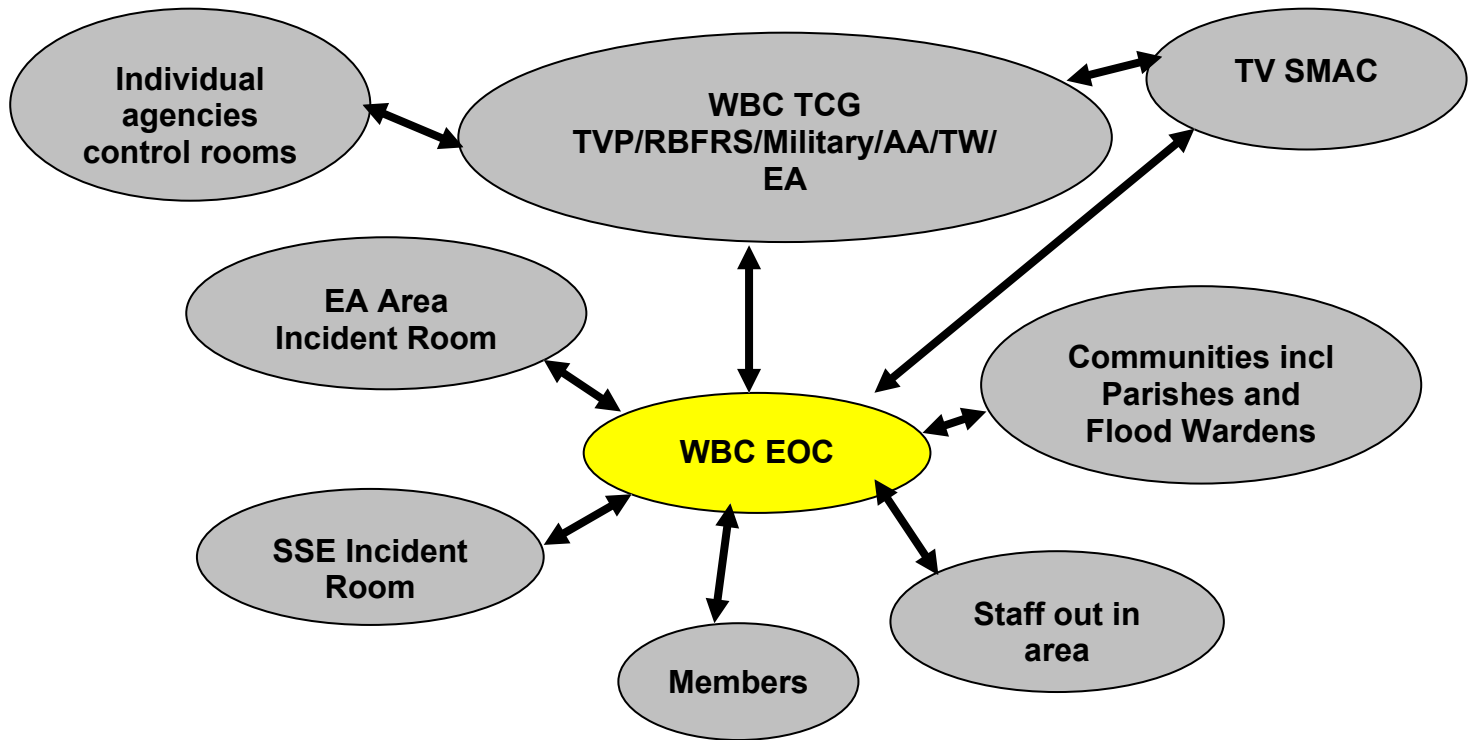
Command & Control Mechanism	Activities and WBC Role
Emergency Operation Centre (EOC)	<p>A 'mini' EOC was operating out of Market Street Offices coordinating the response of the Council.</p> <p>On 7 February 2014 a full EOC was put in place with all roles operating to coordinate the role of the Council in support of the community.</p> <p>A number of Liaison Officers were in attendance from 8 February 2014 from the Military and TVP.</p> <p>The EOC is an officer lead control room.</p> <p>More details in relation to EOC are set out in this section pt 5.</p>
Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG)	<p>A multi-agency TCG was set up in the Council Offices adjacent to the EOC. This was the first time this had happened and was arranged on the basis of necessary communications with the EOC, IT capability etc.</p> <p>The TCG was lead by TVP with support from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Berkshire Council • RBFRS • Military Liaison Officers • EA • Automobile Association Specialist Operational response Team (AA Sort) • Thames Water <p>The role was to support by way of coordinating the multi-agency response to the incident.</p> <p>(A further TCG was in place in Windsor)</p>
Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG)	<p>An SCG was put in place at TVP Headquarters lead by an Assistant Chief Constable (ACC).</p> <p>There were some specific agencies on site the majority of agencies however were dialling into the SCG meetings on a twice daily basis.</p> <p>The purpose of these meetings were to ensure the strategic intentions were being managed, identify any new issues so as to prioritise resources and to ensure the information going to Government was clear in the Commonly Recognised Information Picture (CRIP).</p> <p>Prior to the TCG being set up the representative from West Berkshire was the EOC Controller with support from a Tactical Advisor. When the TCG was in place the lead was the TCG Chair with support from the EOC Controller/WBC LO and other agencies as necessary.</p>

Command & Control Mechanism	Activities and WBC Role
Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG)	A RCG was put in place when the SCG handed over from response to recovery across the Thames Valley. Details of the recovery arrangements are set out in this document.

4.2 Pictorial Diagram of the Command and Control arrangements:



4.3 In more detail the links with other agencies and WBC is set out below:



Key Points 20:

- The key strategic plans in place were followed.
- The whole operation was complex with new processes being added during the event e.g. Sandbag Cell.
- Scalable approach was put in place so as not to impact on the whole Thames Valley agencies too early, hence TV LRF Tactical Teleconferences etc.
- The full WBC TCG was set up approx 5 days later than it could have. The interim situation was for multi-agency responders to join in with the EOC staff. This became too crowded and unworkable hence the move to a separate WBC TCG.
- Some agencies (TW & EA) took some time to provide representation into the WBC TCG. Their input when present was noticeable and positive.
- The impact of senior officers from the Regional EA offices going outside the communications chain direct to politicians created difficulties.
- The arrangements of the WBC TCG adjacent to the WBC EOC was deemed to be positive.
- The routine for the days were set out clearly at an early stage along with the strategic intentions
- A clear communications route with contact details between Control Rooms needs to be put in place at an early stage – ideally with generic contacts rather than individuals' details to ensure all the appropriate information is passed to all the relevant agencies and control rooms.
- Some Environment Agency and TV LRF led teleconferences were poorly managed such that:
 - They were too long in duration.
 - Notes/minutes took too long to be distributed.
 - Not all the relevant agencies were on the teleconferences

Recommendations:

- (xxv) Teleconferences at all levels need to be reviewed in order to reduce the impact on the response.
- (xxvi) The concept of the Strategic Sandbag Cell should be considered as a Strategic Resource Cell and developed as part of the TV LRF SCG structure. To include the setting up and closing down of the cell and all the assets.
- (xxvii) It is recommended that as soon as a Major Incident is declared the TCG should be put in place.
- (xxviii) Clear communications routes to all command and control locations should be put in place including contact details.
- (xxix) Training is recommended for all officers who could be involved in the Command structure to ensure they understand their role and those of others.

5. WBC Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)

- 5.1 When the Major Incident was declared on 7 Feb 2014 the EOC was established on a formal basis. The setting up and running data is detailed below:
- (a) Set up - When the major incident was declared the full EOC was in place within 30 minutes.
 - (b) Roles put in place. As per the Major Incident Plan the roles that were put in place included:
 - Controller
 - Loggist
 - Deputy Controller
 - Welfare Officer
 - Logistics Officer
 - Operations Officer
 - Highways Officer
 - HR Officer
 - Tactical Advisor
 - (c) Shifts - The 8hr shift pattern put in place for the 24/7 operation was:
 - 0800- 1600hrs
 - 1600 – midnight
 - Midnight to 0800hrs
 - (d) Staffing - The EOC was operating 24/7 from 7 February to 21 February 2014. For each shift staff were nominated for all the roles. Initially the staff targeted were those that had undertaken Emergency Planning and EOC training.

However due to the intensity of the response, some untrained staff were involved so as to keep business as usual activities underway.

- (e) Each shift was initially staffed 100% and for all daytime shifts this was necessary. However for some late shifts and the night shifts people were stood down on the basis of need – ideally in advance of the shift but some were stood down during the shift due to the requirements at the time.
- (f) A total of 176 staff were placed shifts, some of which were stood down but they were available.

Of these 176 staff:

- 15 did 2 shifts
- 15 did 3 shifts
- 6 did 4 shifts
- 4 did 5 shifts
- 22 Stood Down

Over 360 staff volunteered so not all were given a shift.

The staff came from across the Council as shown below:

Directorate	Nos.	Service	Nos.	Stood down	HoS	% of service volunteering
Resources	354		63	8		18
		Strategic Support	19	2	Y – 3	37
		ICT	12		Y – 2	20
		Finance	7	3	Y – 1	13
		Public Health & Wellbeing	5		Y – 1	63
		Customer Services	10	2	Y – 3	8
		HR	7		Y – 2	23
		Legal	1	1	N (Stood down)	5
Environment	402		63	9		16
		Culture & EP	27	6	Y – 5	14
		Planning & Countryside	17	2	Y – 1	18
		Highways & Transport	18	1	Y- 1	16

Directorate	Nos.	Service	Nos.	Stood down	HoS	% of service volunteering
Communities	797		48	7	Director	6
		Adult Social Care	10	1	Y – 3	3
		Education	12	3	Y – 1	7
		Children Services	9	2	N – 0	5
		Care Com, Housing & Safeguarding	15	1	Y - 4	22
		ASC Efficiency	0		N- 0	0

The Head of Strategic Support and the Civil Contingencies Team provided a presence and support to the EOC on a daily basis.

It should also be noted that in the Communities Directorate, and indeed other Directorates, there were a number of staff who fulfil critical functions e.g. carers etc who have a roll in emergencies but not in the EOC.

(g) Daily Routine.

The 'routine' for the EOC apart from shift changes involved:

- Change of shift briefings
- WBC TCG Meeting 0730
- TV TCG telecom 0800
- SCG Telecom 1000
- WBC TCG meeting 1500
- SCG Telecom 1600
- WBC TCG meeting 1930

(h) Welfare of Staff in EOC

Due to the intensity of the incident and timings of shifts it was difficult for staff in the EOC to take 'normal' breaks. As a result a decision was made to provide refreshments for staff in the EOC. This was carried out for lunch and evening meals.

Post the incident welfare/counselling support was made available to all involved.

- (i) External communications were in place using phone, mobiles and airwave radios. The airwave radios were used to talk directly and securely to officers out on locations in West Berkshire and to officers across Berkshire where support was being provided.
- (j) Customer Services operated every work day and an additional day on Sat 8 Feb in support of the EOC taking calls from the public.

Key Points 21:

- The basics of the EOC arrangement worked well.
- The willingness of staff to support the EOC or their colleagues in the office was exceptional
- The use of the Airwave radios became more valuable as officers used them more confidently.
- There was a real 'buzz' of the team all working together to resolve emerging issues etc.
- With many staff who have not worked in the EOC in past or even not trained there were some gaps in understanding.

Recommendations:

(xxx) Some areas to be improved for the future include:

- a. Greater clarity over the roles and responsibilities of everyone in the EOC
- b. The suitability of some staff to work in the EOC – their understanding and competence
- c. Staffing of the EOC (most experienced v new; same people v different people in relation to those who volunteer)
- d. The shift patterns including the length of shifts
- e. Staff training for each of the roles
- f. Welfare considerations
- g. Information management system

(xxxi) Training on the use of Airwave radios

(xxxii) A Tactical Advisor (someone who is more aware of the plans, the responders and implications to support the decision making of the Controller) in the EOC should be considered

(xxxiii) Additional training of staff in the operation of the EOC including exercises to be increased in frequency.

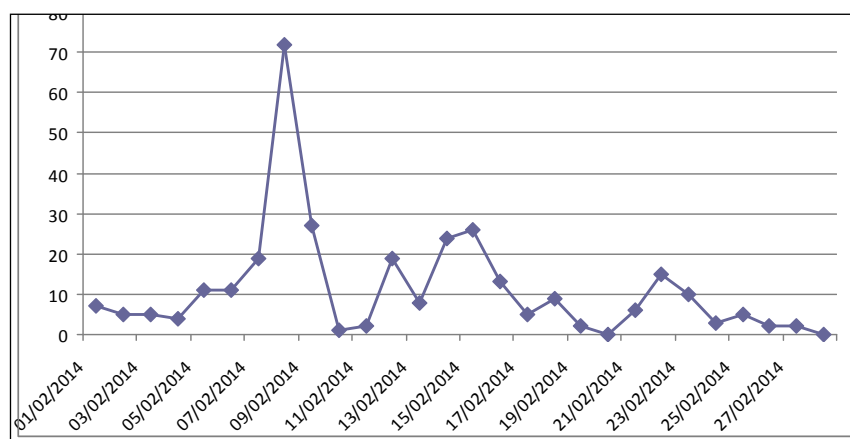
6. Information Management

6.1 During any incident a large amount of information is provided in and out of the EOC. For the period the EOC was open the following volumes of data and requests were made to the Council:

- (a) Phone calls: 1537 phone calls into the EOC phone lines
- (b) Emails received and sent. Over 8000 emails received. This does not include emails to individual offers or emergency planning:

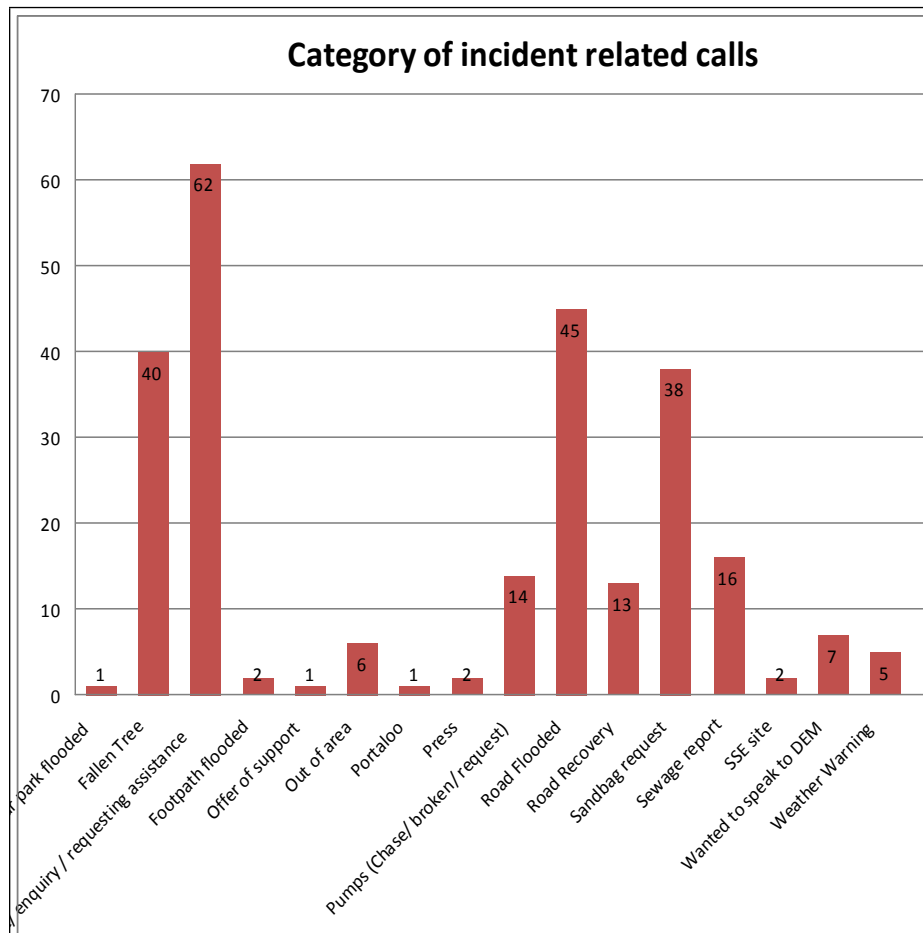
Mailbox	Sent	Received
Controller	4856 (some auto forwards)	2238
Deputy	361	760
Operations	271	611
Welfare	276	495
Logistics	95	254
Information	341	1980
Admin	265	1740

- (c) 1500 requests for support, providing information etc logged and actioned.
- (d) Out of hours calls. Overnight on 7/8 February the OOH contact centre was operating with the number of calls received shown on the graph below. The report indicates a significantly lower number of calls for the rest of the period if not 0 calls. This was because the EOC was operating and taking the calls.



Source: Civil Contingencies Team

- (e) Of the calls received during the 2 week period the breakdown of the calls received is set out below:



Source – Customer Services

- (f) The calls received by the Council were not too dissimilar to other years in total suggesting other calls were not being made due to the situation:

Customer Services Calls Received							
Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Jan	5328	5766	8325 (extreme cold and snow)	4359	4081	5786	4242
Feb	4715	7535 (extreme cold and snow)	3368	2801	3422	3503	4308
Total	10043	13301	11693	7160	7503	9289	8550

- 6.2 The requests and information provided were logged on a running excel spread sheet to monitor for actions being completed by the loggist.

Key Points 22:

- The excel spread sheet was complex due the numbers of calls involved. The calls received were sometimes not related to West Berkshire Council e.g. sewage issues which had to be re-directed to the appropriate agency.
- The calls overall in to the Customer Services did not increase over the same period as to other years. The calls relating to other issues decreased overall.
- Too many phone calls and emails were received directly into the EOC from members of the public instead of first going through Customer Services where they could often be dealt with, allowing the EOC to coordinate the responses.
- The role of the loggist was confused with logging info.

Recommendations:

- (xxxiv) Consideration should be given to a new information management system used in the EOC, which could be seen by other agencies and areas in the Council to share information and actions.
- (xxxv) Training of loggists is recommended.

7.

Key Points 23:

- A Duty Executive Member was a new initiative which worked well and enabled the EOC to focus on the task in hand.
- Daily updates were provided to Members.
- Members were engaged in the process and supportive to the response

Members

- 7.1 Members in the EOC are not encouraged due to the operational tempo of the work involved. This was managed effectively by having a duty Executive Member designated as the lead contact for the EOC.

Recommendations:

- (xxxvi) A duty Executive Member arrangement as the point of contact for EOC should continue with the Group Executives continuing as the main conduit for Member queries.

8. Inter-agency Working

8.1 The response to the flooding was a multi-agency response with the following agencies supporting the Council:

Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service	Thames Water
Other fire services from across UK including lead officers for HVP's	SSE
Thames Valley Police	Vodafone
Environment Agency	BT
Military: Royal Navy from Portsmouth Army from 7 Rifles, 4 Rifles and 42 Engr (GEO) RAF from Brize Norton	Highways Agency AA Special Operations Response Team (SORT)

Key Points 24:

- Good overall multi-agency response.
- Assistance provided by the military was welcomed from the Council and professional partners but also the communities. Integrating the military into the command and control systems needs further work.
- The coordination and support for national and local assets worked well.
- Further work with the Environment Agency is required to ascertain whether practical engineering solutions to an imminent flooding risk could be considered and resolved much quicker.
- National support from FRS national leads on HVP's and the equipment was welcomed although the added value they provided was difficult to assess.
- Excellent support by AA Sort who provided live pictures from risk areas so as resource prioritisation could be informed.

Recommendations:

(xxxviii) The Adverse Weather Plan flood section should consider planned potential engineering solutions to imminent flooding risk rather than sandbags or other flood defences. To include the deployment of FRS HVP's and flooding of farm land.

9. Mutual Aid

- 9.1 Mutual aid was provided by other Local Authorities across Berkshire in the form of:
- Bracknell Forest Council – provision of a Tactical Advisor to support Civil Contingencies
 - Reading Borough Council – provision of Liaison Officers to the east of the District
 - Wokingham Borough Council – provision of equipment
- 9.2 This is all agreed in advance by the appropriate Chief Executives for the whole of Berkshire when they approve the annual Berkshire LA Emergency Planning Memorandum of Understanding.

Key Points 25:

- Having the MOU agreement in place in advance was advantageous in relation to the process and the repayments thereafter.
- Offers of support were being provided at an early stage from across the Berks LA's which were less impacted than West Berkshire.

10. Military Aid to the Civil Authority (MACA)

- 10.1 The military were made available to the Council from the 8 Feb as a result of national concerns and as a result of the Council declaring a Major Incident. No formal request was made via the SCG instead initial direct contact was made from the military to the Civil Contingencies Manager.
- 10.2 On activation they provided a Liaison Officer into the EOC, the CO made direct contact with the Controller and soldiers were mustered across the area.
- 10.3 The military were based at:
- Brock Barracks, Reading
 - Denison Barracks, Hermitage
 - Newbury Weekly News Offices
 - WBC, Council Offices
- 10.4 They had their own command and control arrangements which were set up in the Council Offices for their planning and reporting to 145 Bde via teleconferences.
- 10.5 7 Rifles area of responsibility was to the east of the district and crossed into Reading BC with 4 Rifles covering the west of the district.
- 10.6 The areas of focus for the Military included:
- sandbag filling based at Chieveley Depot for the TV Strategic Sandbag Cell
 - laying of sandbags
 - welfare checks
 - checking sites in advance in order that if an evacuation was necessary they had an awareness of the locations.
- 10.7 Their first tasking was issued on 8 Feb and was completed in 9th Feb which was in support of blocking a breach in the canal near Theale which was adding to the risk of an SSE site flooding.

- 10.8 Guidance on the processes and support from the Military is found in the document [JDP 02: Operations in the UK \(second edition\) - Publications - GOV.UK](#) prepared by the Ministry of Defence.

Key Points 26:

- The normal activation process was not put in place i.e. request to SCG to MoD etc. Instead the military were offering their support.
- The military mustering was quick and effective with a large resource available in a short period of time.
- 2 units were supporting West Berkshire but their boundaries were not coterminous with Council areas crossing West Berkshire and Oxfordshire boundaries.
- It took a bit of time for the Civil and Military agencies to fully appreciate each others roles, responsibilities and operational understanding.
- Tasks were assigned to the military, however initially this process was a little uncoordinated:
 - the tasking process perhaps not as clear as they needed to be;
 - Council staff needed to be with the military since they were acting on our behalf;
 - the command chain at the start for the military tasks to be confirmed by their chain of command was long and time consuming;
 - at times there were masses of resources by way of personnel but no tasks they could do which would make a difference
- the joint working to find solutions was invaluable – in that other military assets and expertise could be used if needed
- there was a degree of training required as to how to lay sandbags to get the most effective flood defence put in place.
- the support they provided by way of sandbag filling and deployment would not have been possible otherwise
- the support allowed other more technical work to be carried out by contractors and staff.
- Some military staff in their efforts to be helpful were adding to the workload of the Council
- A military flight to gain imagery of the Thames Valley only focused on the Thames and the outcome was questionable as to its value.
- they were only available in the response phase and not the recovery phase.

Recommendations:

- (xxxix) The activation of MOD assets should be reviewed.
- (xl) Ideally one military unit supporting West Berkshire would assist in clarity of control and taskings.
- (xli) Joint training should be undertaken to allow confidence and understanding between military and the Council to develop further including clarity on the roles, command and control, tasking processes (at TV LRF, Berkshire and West Berkshire levels)
- (xlii) On activation of the military any specific tasks should be accompanied by training to ensure the work is effective e.g. how to fill and build sandbag walls as floods defences.

11. Resources

The resources involved in this incident included staff and equipment.

11.1 Staff

In addition to the staff involved directly in the EOC there was a significant number of staff involved out on site. These staff included:

- Highways Officers who were involved in assessing the conditions and trying to come up with solutions/preventative means to reduce the risk of flooding.
- Housing Officers – assessing and supporting, including phoning or visiting vulnerable clients, many not on our database.
- Environmental Health Officers – assessing public health issues
- Rangers and Countryside staff – assessing public rights of way, putting in closures and maintaining them.

Key Points 27:

- The management of these staff on site is essential for their safety & welfare. Rotas, teams for specific areas, service coordination and links to the EOC are essential.

Recommendations:

- (xliv) The EOC plan should include processes and resources to coordinate rotas of all staff involved in the response including those on site. This may be linked to service coordination.

11.2 **Contractors**

All the Council's contractors worked to ensure critical services were provided including care home workers.

Volkers Highways operated at full capacity to support the response with staff, pumps, sandbags, road closures and signage being provided. They also were supporting the military doing the sand bag filling at the Councils depot.

11.3 **Equipment**

Sandbags: Whilst the policy in relation to the provision of sandbags was in place and was being adhered to. This had to change due to the Prime Ministers comment on 11 Feb 14 *"My message to the country today is this. Money is no object in this relief effort, whatever money is needed for it will be spent. We will take whatever steps are necessary"*. As a result in West Berkshire alone over 15,000 sandbags were delivered, in addition there was 46,000 made and supported West Berkshire (and others) as controlled by the Environment Agency.

The recovery of these sandbags, along with others provided by Parishes and individuals resulted in 15 tonnes of wet sandbags being recovered over a 39 days period with approximately 585 tonnes, which were moved to landfill.

Signage: 100 additional flood signs had to be procured.

Pumps: Whilst the Council had 3 of its own pumps more were required to support communities and individuals as set out below:

Pumps delivered to communities:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • 2 x 6 inch submersible pumps | West Ilsley (1 x Selwoods, 1 x EA) |
| • 1 x 4 inch mechanical pump | Bradfield (Selwoods) |
| • 1 x 4 inch petrol pump | Lambourn (Winnersh plant) |
| • 1 x 8 inch mechanical pump | Eastbury (Selwoods) |
| • 1 x 6 inch submersible pump | Eastbury (Pump Supplies) |
| • 2 x 6 inch submersible pumps | Great Shefford (Pump Supplies) |
| • 1 x 6 inch mechanical pump | Great Shefford (WBC) |
| • 3 x 6 inch mechanical pump
Pump Supplies) | Great Shefford (1 x WBC, 1x Selwoods, 1x |

Pumps delivered to houses:

- 1 x 2 inch submersible - Lambourn
- 2 x 2 inch submersible - West Ilsley
- 1 x VH pump - East Ilsley
- 2 x 4 inch pumps - Various locations

In addition to the above pumps, RBFRS secured and coordinated the High Volume Pumps to support the efforts in:

- Wellington Close, Newbury
- SSE site, Pingewood
- West Ilsley

- Stables, West Ilsley
- East Ilsley
- Compton

Generators. Due to power cuts generators were supplied to some premises in East Ilsley in order that they could keep their water pumps operating.

Portaloos. In locations where the sewage system was being inundated with water to such an extent that the communities could not use their private facilities, portaloos were provided. A total of 35 were provided at the following locations, some were in place for a few weeks others were in place for over 4 weeks.

- Purley on Thames
- Pingewood
- West Ilsley
- Eastbury
- East Garston
- Great Shefford
- Newbury (Shaw)

Rest Centres. 3 rest centres were available during the floods. Rest centres in Purley on Thames and Eastbury had equipment delivered and were ready to be staffed if needed. Another was available in the Phoenix Centre, Newbury. The only one used was the Phoenix Centre for 3 x evacuees from Lambourn Court. This was utilised for one day and night before homes were found for the evacuated residents by the owner of the site.

Key Points 28:

- A great deal of resources were involved in the response from a wide number of agencies.
- Political comments made in the in the national media had an immediate impact on the demands on the local response.
- Different communities had very different demands of the Council as to the resources and support they expected.
- Property level flood defence information is not well known to individual property owners which results in many feeling that sandbags are the answer – they often are not.
- Sourcing some key resources such as pumps was difficult due to the demand nationally.
- The responsibility as to whether the Council or other agencies should provide all the resources e.g. portaloos.
- The forward thinking and support provided by way of sourcing and providing generators and rest centres were positive.

Recommendations:

- (xlvi) National and local promotion for properties at risk of flooding to prepare by the installation of property level protection where possible.
- (xlvii) Clarity on roles and responsibilities of agencies and the public should be promoted.
- (xlviii) A resource database should be considered detailed what is available already by the Council directly, in the community and local companies.
- (xlix) Clarity as to who is responsible for providing some supporting equipment is necessary.
- (l) A review of the adverse weather plan should be undertaken to indicate where key resources can be put in place to give the best benefit for the wider community if no PLP is in place.
- (li) The Councils sandbag policy should be reviewed.

12. Communications

An essential part of any incident is to warn and inform the community as to the situation, what agencies are doing and what they can do to help to help themselves. In so doing the Council used a number of tools to do so including:

12.1 Website

Visits to the WBC website were up an average of 50% during this period. Our flooding map received almost 20,000 views and was the most popular page on the site, surpassing even the Home Page, for three days in a row.

Whilst the usual peak time for website use is 11:00 or 12:00, on 7 and 8 of February it was 14:00 and on 9 February it was 22:00. Evening viewing figures were much higher than normal emphasising the need to keep content updated around the clock.

Search phrases included “west berkshire flooding”; “berkshire flood warnings” and “newbury flooding” meaning people were actively looking for information about flooding and coming to our website to find it.

12.2 Social Media

There were 1,000 visits to our site from links in Facebook, Twitter also featured highly too as a “referring site”.

Whilst the EOC was operational the Communications team monitored and responded to social media at least 12 hours a day, longer on some days where needed.

12.3 Press Releases

In order to coordinate press release content TVP coordinated a daily Communications meeting.

During the period 7 January to 30 May 2014 there were 2 press releases provided and 28 press enquiries made relating to the flooding. The average press enquiry per month is just over 41.

The majority of these enquiries were from Newbury Weekly News (20 enquires , 71%), 3 enquiries came from Reading Chronicle, 2 from Heart Thames Valley and 1 enquiry each from BBC South Today, Reading Post and The Breeze.

12.4 You Tube

TVP were producing YOU Tube videos and posting them. These were coordinated from the West Berkshire TCG.

12.5 Community Communications

On almost a daily basis from 22 December 2013 until end March 2014 there was communications going out from the Civil Contingencies Manager to the following:

- Flood Wardens
- Town and Parish Council Clerks
- Ward Members
- Businesses

These were sent by email and included details of:

- Weather forecast
- EA update and river/groundwater conditions
- What was expected in next 24/48hrs
- What the Agencies were doing
- What the Council was doing
- What was recommended of the communities

Some communities had a community email group and were passing this on via that route, others were placing the details in shop windows or notice boards or on parish website to try to keep the communities up to date.

12.6 Members Updates

The Controller was tasked each shift to produce an update for members as an email.

12.7 Professional Partners

In addition to the TCG/SCG teleconferences a more detailed report was sent to professional partners to update them.

12.8 Staff Updates

Emails were provided periodically for all staff to receive updates. In addition there were updates provided to Emergency Planning Liaison Officers, Business Continuity Liaison Officers, HoS, Directors, Duty Emergency Managers, Duty Highways Officers etc. These were then being passed onto schools, care providers and other contractors to ensure they were all being kept up to date.

12.9 External Media Coverage

During the event there was a reasonable degree of media coverage from local and national TV and Radio. These tended to follow some key events or when personalities visited the area. This included:

- Radio Berkshire visiting Purley on Thames
- Good Morning Britain – when Ed Miliband MP visited Purley on Thames
- South Today – visiting Newbury (Shaw) area when the river started to overtop in that area.
- Local & national news outlets when the Minister of Armed Forces visited 7 Rifles plugging a gap in the Kennet & Avon Canal near Pingewood.

12.10 Flood Bus

On 2 occasions a multi-agency flood bus was put in place. This involved 2 West Berkshire logo'd minibuses with a number of staff from West Berkshire Council, Thames Water, the Environment Agency, RBFRS and TVP visiting flood affected areas providing a point of contact to ask questions in the community.

Key Points 29:

- The range of methods used to get messages out to the communities and individuals was comprehensive however much of this usage was one offs in terms of volume and was often reacting rather than being proactive.
- Whilst TV or Radio coverage can be welcome in order to get messages across to the public it is not often welcome by residents who are struggling to cope and concerned about blighting their property. It also often resulted in authorised media spokespersons for the Council being diverted from tasks to support their media visit.

Recommendations:

- (lii) The Communications team should put in place:
 - a. A comprehensive communications strategy for emergencies detailing how it will operate and what means of communications will be put in place.
 - b. The above plan should involve 27/7 cover and ability to operate all communication options.
 - c. The above plan should have details of support by way of mutual aid.
- (liii) Local communities with social media groups should be encouraged to join West Berkshire social media in order to allow messages to be automatically relayed.
- (liv) Communities should be encouraged to review how they pass information on locally including investigating websites/social media/poster locations etc
- (lv) The communications team should actively meet with other communication teams across Berkshire and Thames Valley in order to develop greater understanding and the opportunities for the teams to support each other.

13. Visits

- 13.1 In any major incident there is often the will by MP's, representatives of the Queen (Lord Lieutenant/Deputy LL) etc to visit the area to better understand the impact of the flooding. This is understood and welcomed by communities provided the motives are genuine concern for the area.
- 13.2 Civil Servants who are responsible for implementing government policy also visited the area. This was important to ensure that they are able to advise the Government about the impact and effectiveness of any particular policy.

Key Points 30:

- Managing and supporting "VIP" visits is important and should be the responsibility of staff not dealing with frontline issues.
- Having a 'visits plan' template was useful in making sure that the visits were managed effectively.
- Local MP's positively engaged with the EOC to get updates and advise where they were going in order that they had the up to date information.

14. WBC Service Response

Directorate/Service/Team	Actions directed at the incident	Incident Resourcing
Environment Directorate		
Planning & Countryside		
Countryside - PROW	Receipt of ELMs and co-ordination of officer work: Co-ordination of volunteer surveyors: Posting of closure notices, site checks Some welfare work Check damage to PROW Arranging for repairs	Whole team
Building Control	Officers available to check on structural issues to buildings (and sink holes)	
Culture & Environmental Protection		
Arts & Leisure	Activity Team West Berkshire (Adventure Dolphin) used boats to check on communities and move people around	
Libraries	Provided customers with information regarding changes in the mobile library service	
Trading Standards		Staff in EOC - 1
Env Health	Checking private water supplies Managing complaints about drainage and systems overflowing Checking for potential faecal contamination Checking impact on food businesses	Staff in EOC – Logistics/ Operations Bronze Liaison in community
Waste	Checking areas where waste collections could not be made. Coordinating collection points with flooding wardens and community representatives. Notifying community of waste collection status Organising clear up of flood debris Providing advice on disposal of flood damaged waste	staff in EOC - Operations staff in community (waste)

Directorate/Service/Team	Actions directed at the incident	Incident Resourcing
Highways & Transport		
Highways Transport	<p>Arranged and procured school transport for flood victims who had been moved into temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Managed diversions and timetable changes for school, PRU and public transport, particularly in the areas of Purley, Shaw Road, East Ilsley and Hampstead Norreys.</p> <p>Liaised between operators, Civil Contingences and Traffic Management.</p> <p>Website updates (e.g. Traveline and social media feeds) and customer information notices.</p>	<p>Carried out by 5 officers: 4 in Education Transport, 1 in Public Transport.</p>
Highways Maintenance	<p>Response to ELMs/customer service requests</p> <p>EOC coordination</p> <p>Highway inspections</p> <p>Arranging repairs/remedial works on the highway with Volker Highways</p> <p>Post flood condition surveys</p> <p>DfT bid for flood funding</p> <p>Arranging post flood repairs</p> <p>Managing/processing 3 Party claims</p>	<p>8 staff involved</p>
Highways Projects	<p>Organised daily rota of engineers to undertake site visits and acted as liaison between engineers and EOC.</p> <p>Arranging emergency engineering works.</p> <p>Liaising with other FRMA's and emergency services.</p> <p>Responding to flooding issues and advising the EOC.</p> <p>Site visits to monitor known flood sites and check infrastructure.</p> <p>Meeting with stakeholders and providing advice where required/possible.</p> <p>Deploying pumps.</p> <p>Recording flood incidents on site (scale & extent of flooding).</p>	<p>5 staff involved</p>

Directorate/Service/Team	Actions directed at the incident	Incident Resourcing
Highways Traffic & Road Safety	Processing emergency road closures and notices. Arranging road closure signs with Volker's Checking water levels in Purley, checking the sandbag situation and ensuring the pumping station is working, Erecting barriers and road closed signs in Purley	
General	General liaison with other emergency services, residents, WBC staff and EOC. Supported flood bus	
Resources Directorate		
Strategic Support		
Service General	Support to the EOC Management of the Council's website Support to the Recovery Leading the OSMC review of event	~10 staff
Civil Contingencies Team	Coordinated the actions of the Council prior to major incident declaration Acted as tactical advisors (TACADS) Provided daily updates to flood wardens, parishes and ward members Visited sites to assess needs of community and support other staff Supported flood bus Liaised with other responding agencies. Supported the recovery acting as TACADS	2 staff
Communications Team	Supporting the joint multi-agency teleconferences Provision of press releases Providing responses to media enquires Preparation of materials to the flood info bus.	2 staff

Directorate/Service/Team	Actions directed at the incident	Incident Resourcing
Safer Community Partnership	<p>All Neighbourhood Warden teams did daily status checks across various areas in primarily Pangbourne and Purley, Theale and Newbury.</p> <p>Assisted Flood Wardens in Pangbourne and Purley distributing sandbags, they helped one resident move her possessions.</p> <p>Delivered hundreds of the foam pads for sandbagging, swept water from a number of gardens and helped sandbag the surround of Lambourn Court. They also did this in many other places, including Cromwell Rd, Shaw Rd and Newport Rd.</p> <p>Visited residents known to them.</p> <p>Most time was spent re-assuring and updating residents on the situation and talking to sightseers from outside the affected areas.</p> <p>Reported issues and pictures back to EOC.</p> <p>Involved in recovery.</p> <p>Sent out safety messages on behalf of the police and RBFPS throughout the flooding period.</p>	<p>Newbury Neighbourhood Wardens: the whole of the Newbury warden team worked during the flooding, which included 6 staff members, (4 full time, 2 part time).</p> <p>West Berkshire Neighbourhood Wardens: during the response, all 5 of the team were involved.</p> <p>Teams were working extra hours and changing rotas to support the effort.</p>
Finance	<p>Facilitated the capturing of all costs associated with the flooding</p> <p>Co-ordinating the Bellwin claim</p> <p>Providing reports on expenditure</p>	<p>Head of Finance, Finance Manager</p>
Customer Services	<p>Creation of ELM requests, general information and signposting.</p> <p>Close liaison with the EOC to inform of developing situations and emergency escalations.</p> <p>2 staff covered shifts in EOC</p> <p>Other staff volunteered but were stood down.</p> <p>Contact Centre open at weekend to deal with OOH calls.</p>	<p>2x Staff in EOC.</p> <p>4x staff in Contact centre over weekend of storms.</p>

Directorate/Service/Team	Actions directed at the incident	Incident Resourcing
Legal	EOC Staffing. Support on certain topics.	
ICT	EOC staffing. Technical support.	
HR	Offered counselling to staff affected by Flooding. Attended recovery meetings. Collated and prepared the payment information sent to Payroll for payment. Supporting numerous hours work and queries with staff and Payroll.	5 x HR Staff from the Training team undertook shifts in the EOC. Others within HR volunteered but were either stood down or not required. Roles undertaken were; Information Loggist and Admin.
Public Health & Wellbeing	Produced local Public Health messages, including tweets for comms to send out on mental health issues relating to flooding, sanitation issues, risks to health from flooding etc. Staff went out on the 'flood bus'. Dealt with a number of emails from individuals concerned about sewage and public health risks Supported recovery process.	All members of the PH and wellbeing team were involved in writing and localising PH information for residents. Staff – 1 member of staff went out on Sat for 10 hours and 2 staff spent 8 hours each during the week. Several hours spent responding to residents and press enquiries and liaising with other services such as environmental health in the council.
Communities		
Adult Social Care	Welfare work. Visited effected communities. Support flood bus. Liaising with external providers and agencies. Reduce non essential work. Check flooded areas for identified and non identified vulnerable groups. RAISE support for EOC.	

Directorate/Service/Team	Actions directed at the incident	Incident Resourcing
	<p>Rest centres stand by.</p> <p>Rest centre opening.</p> <p>Liaison with military in community.</p> <p>Domiciliary Care Services – staff were diverted to usable roadways to ensure all service users received their planned visits, impact on the service was an increase in mileage and travelling time for staff.</p> <p>Resource Centres – opened with business as usual approach. Staffing levels were maintained by organising cover for those affected. Phoenix Centre utilised as a Rest Centre. Some staff from the phoenix centre assisted with setting up the designated area.</p> <p>Care homes, mainly unaffected apart from Willows Edge that had to be sandbagged and placed on alert for possible evacuation. Staff levels maintained.</p> <p>Shared Lives, business as usual. Staff able to carry on their normal work duties.</p>	
Education	<p>Supporting the schools, helping them with information, reviewing the situation and providing updates.</p> <p>Visited several sites and was planning should the flooding have persisted.</p> <p>Provided regular service updates and carefully monitoring the situation.</p>	<p>Estimate that around 100 hours was spent supporting schools during the February period. This doesn't take into account the pre-Xmas storms.</p>
Children Services	<p>Undertook telephone checks and visits to families in the affected areas that had been identified as vulnerable</p>	<p>4 Staff in the EOC</p> <p>Staff doing phone checks</p>

Directorate/Service/Team	Actions directed at the incident	Incident Resourcing
Care Commissioning, Housing & Safeguarding	Welfare work. Visited effected communities. Support flood bus. Liaising with external providers and agencies. Reduce non essential work. Check flooded areas for identified and non identified vulnerable groups. RAISE support for EOC. Rest centres stand by. Rest centre opening. Liaison with military in community. Telephone checks to vulnerable clients by the Care Placement Team. Contracts and Care Placement Team liaised with home care agencies.	

Key Points 31:

- Whilst the EOC was the focus of staff attention the roles of the services were wide ranging across the whole Council.

Recommendations:

- (Ivi) The Councils Corporate BC and Service BC plans should all be reviewed in light of this incident.

14. Business Continuity

Whenever there is a Major Incident then business continuity may be affected. The Council has plans in place corporately and at most service levels to ensure this is managed effectively.

Due to the nature of the event no Business Continuity incident was declared across the Council. However most services were impacted to some extent and therefore Staff not involved in the EOC prioritised the work they would do in order to ensure critical services continued.

Key Points 32:

- Whilst no Council wide BC Incident was declared all services by default entered into the process of prioritisation and ensuring all critical and essential services were continued.

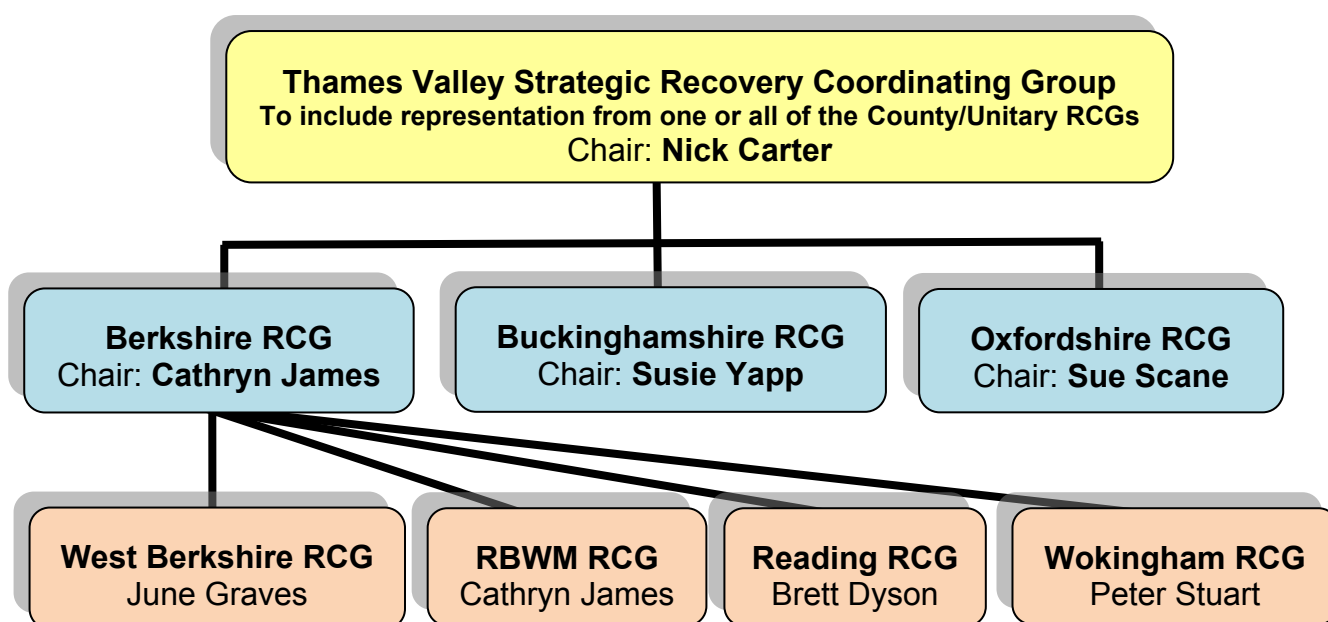
15. Recovery

When the Strategic Coordinating Centre (SCC) closed and the Recovery process took over the arrangements of coordination, the Strategic Lead for the Thames Valley was led by Chief Executive, Nick Carter from West Berkshire who could call on other strategic leads if necessary.

Below the Strategic level the Counties of Oxon, Bucks and Milton Keynes had their own Recovery Groups as did all the unitaries in Berkshire. The coordination of the recovery across Berkshire was lead by RBWM.

The Strategic Group was in place to coordinate recovery across the Thames Valley in order to try to ensure consistency across boundaries where possible. It was also a conduit for issues to be raised at Government Level.

The structure of the recovery across the Thames Valley is set out below:



Within West Berkshire a Head of Service was nominated as the lead for recovery.

A Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) was put in place with a number of subgroups reporting into it including:

- Finance – focusing on recovery of costs, making bids for centralised funding and managing the grants to for property level protection and business support.
- Health & Well Being – focusing on public health issues such as gastroenteritis and the psychosocial elements of peoples well being,
- Infrastructure – focusing on the repairs necessary ranging from gulley cleaning, potholes, renewal of roads and public rights of way.
- Resources- focusing on the recovery of pumps, sandbags and other equipment
- HR- Staff Welfare/Support – focusing on staff welfare, staff payments and support.
- Communications- providing the communications for recovery

An action plan was developed and through weekly/monthly meetings the actions monitored and progressed.

Whilst most of the actions are closed in relation to recovery of sandbags, pumps etc some of the actions will remain open for some time such as Repair and Renewal Grants, monitoring of psychosocial effects and infrastructure repairs.

The recovery in West Berkshire was a phased process since some of the areas were flooded or at risk of flooding until late June.

Key Points 33:

- The swift setting up of the recovery group and structure in West Berkshire meant that a plan and actions were put in place effectively.
- For each group a Tactical Advisor who knows the plan was put in place which was effective in supporting chairs navigate the processes.
- Some national guidance in relation to Public Health and Sandbags contradicted each other.
- Some rural communities noticeably worked together to support their Community and the Council in the recovery process. Whereas in communities in Newbury this was not the case.
- Supporting the Repair and Renew Grants process which takes approx 7.5hrs per application to administer.
- Expectations of communities as to speed of recovery of their local infrastructure was difficult to manage due to the scale.

Recommendations:

- (lvii) The TV LRF Recovery Plan should be reviewed to include
 - a. Coordination revision for a TV wide incident
 - b. Details on the roles of communities
 - c. A Tactical Advisor who knows the plan to advise the leads.
 - d. Communication routes as to how to get communities supporting the clear up of their own area.
- (lviii) Agencies should review now the guidance in relation to public health messages and handling of sandbags so they are coordinated and readily available.

16. Finances

- 16.1 A new cost code was put in place at an early stage to allow all costs to be captured. This has sufficient staff approved to raise and approve orders quickly.
- 16.2 The Civil Contingencies procurements cards were used effectively to purchase urgent supplies during the incident. The credit on each card was sufficient for this event.

- 16.3 Managing the costs by both the 'Agresso' system and the credit card was effective.
- 16.4 This prolonged period of response due to staff costs, contractor costs and resources such as pumps and sandbags etc cost over £1million. The majority of which is recoverable via the [Bellwin scheme 2013 to 2014](#):

Key Points 34:

- Procurement cards were necessary for the event
- Access to some petty cash would have been useful
- The government response by way of releasing funds was not too complex and was released quickly.
- The funding process of Repair and Renew Grants could have been simpler and could include some properties that nearly flooded but for the efforts of the communities and individuals which saved them. They now could now be perceived as being penalised.

Recommendations:

- (ix) The government undertakes a debrief in relation to the Repair and Renew and other flood grants in relation to management of them and the criteria involved.

Section 5 - Consultations and Debriefs Analysis

1. Introduction

The consultation methodology used was a multimodal methodology in order to encourage a wide response rate and to capture as much learning as possible.

The full range is set out below

- (a) 5 Online Surveys (using the on-line Survey Monkey) to be completed by:
 - (i) Residents - on-line and hard copies sent to properties believed to be flooded.
 - (ii) Businesses on-line and hard copies sent to properties believed to be flooded.
 - (iii) Professional Partners – direct email to agencies involved in the response and recovery stages.
 - (iv) Flood wardens, Town & Parish Councils and Ward Members – direct email
 - (v) West Berkshire Council staff – direct email to all staff.
- (b) Consultation with Local Flood Forums (Lambourn Valley, Pang Valley and Streatley)
- (c) West Berkshire Council Emergency Planning Liaison Officer debrief meeting.
- (d) Engagement with other agency or organisation debriefs.

2 Results & Analysis

2.1 On Line Surveys

A series of questions were posed throughout to elicit comments on specific themes identified. Responses to these questions were accepted via an online questionnaire developed and hosted on “Survey Monkey” to allow for easy analysis and collation of data. These surveys were promoted via the media, the Council Website and via emails sent to flood wardens, Town and Parishes and Ward Members; professional partners etc. In addition where we believed properties had flooded hard copies of the questionnaire were sent directly to them. Where hard copies were received then the data was inputted into the online form by Council officers.

The consultations ran from 25 April to 6 June 2014 giving 6 full weeks for responses to be provided. Promotion to complete the survey was provided during this 6 week period.

The majority of the total response to all surveys (497) were received via the online route with 73 (14.6%) being received as hard copies in relation to the residents survey only.

WBC Staff	161
Professional Partners	40
Residents	229 (73 via hard copies)
Businesses	9
Flood Wardens, Town/Parish and Ward Members	58
Total	497

The feedback from these surveys are detailed in Appendices B-G to this document.

Section 6 – Recommendations

A number of recommendations have been established as a result of this review. These are detailed in **Appendix H**.

Section 7 - Conclusions

This review of the adverse weather in late 2013/early 2014 has been comprehensive involving a wide range of responders and those that were affected.

It has involved a number of consultation models including online surveys, meeting debriefs and the Scrutiny process where written reports were received and questions posed by the Commission to dig deeper in to the issues. Therefore the conclusions as to the effectiveness of the response and the recommendations have been developed from a wide range of sources giving them added value.

It should be noted that the process was not aimed at apportioning blame but was focused on the aim which was to establish what could be done differently if a major incident happened again (not just flooding). In so doing the objectives of establishing what happened and why; what went well and what could be improved and in so doing developing an action plan of improvements were achieved.

Care needs to be taken not to only focus on what could be improved. Throughout this process there have been examples of really good work by the Council and others involved, excellent cooperation and working together, the development of new practices and really good community engagement.

There is no doubt the incident challenged everyone but from a Council point of view those involved embraced the challenge and worked with the sole purpose of helping the communities most in need.

The Council will now move forward in the weeks, months and years to come taking forward the recommendations with other agencies and the communities across West Berkshire.

Glossary

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
AA SORT	Automobile Association Special Operations Response Team
BC	Business Continuity
BCLO	Business Continuity Liaison Officer
CMT	Crisis Management Team
CO	Commanding Officer
COBR	Cabinet Office Briefing Room
CRIP	Commonly Recognised Information Picture
DCLG	Dept of Communities and Local Government
DEFRA	Dept of Food and Rural Affairs
DfT	Dept of Transport
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
EPLO	Emergency Planning Liaison Officer
EA	Environment Agency
ELM	Electronic Logging Manager
FRS	Fire & Rescue Service
FWMA	Flood Water Management Act 2010
HoS	Head of Service
LA	Local Authority
LALO	Local Authority Liaison Officer
MACA	Military Aid to the Civil Authority
MIP	Major Incident Plan
NRA	National Risk Assessment
OSMC	Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission
PROW	Public Rights of Way
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
RBWM	Royal Borough Windsor & Maidenhead
RCG	Recovery Coordinating Group
RBFRS	Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service
RED	Resilience and Emergency Division (DCLG)
RAISE	Referral and Assessment In a Social care Environment
TW	Thames Water
SEPD	Southern Electric Power Distribution
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SSE	Scottish & Southern Electricity
SCG	Strategic Coordinating Group
SCC	Strategic Coordinating Centre
TCG	Tactical Coordinating Group
TVP	Thames Valley Police
TV LRF	Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum
TV LRF MAP	Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum Multi-Agency Protocols
TACADS	Tactical Advisor
WBC	West Berkshire Council

Appendix A - OSMC 2007 Flood Report Recommendations – Update

No.	Recommendation	Owned By	Status Prior to Floods 13/14
1	Work should be undertaken to reduce the risk of flooding to Aldermaston school and to mitigate the effect that any flooding may have.	Aldermaston School, Environment Agency, West Berkshire Council	The assessment of why the school flooded, how it flooded and how it could be prevented or at least reduced was undertaken. A permanent solution to provide building flood resistance was installed over Easter 2014. CLOSED
2	All schools at risk from flooding should subscribe to the Environment Agency's 'Floodline' alert service.	Local Education Authority (West Berkshire Council), all West Berkshire Schools	Education worked with schools after the 2007 flooding, provided them with information and encouraged them to register. However, to put this into some context, there are very few schools at risk from river flooding. There are two schools within the Environment Agency's flood zones. The school flooding in 2007 was predominantly due to pluvial and poor on-site surface water drainage. In a severe weather event Education Service monitor the environment agency and met office sites and receive information from Civil Contingencies. The Service increases the level of communication with schools, including passing this information on, supporting schools with measures to protect and dealing with incidents. CLOSED
3	An investigation should be undertaken to find out how the flooding in Pangbourne happened, and work be planned to ensure all water courses are properly maintained and any possible flood alleviation measures are put in place.	Environment Agency	A significant number of improvements have been undertaken by the EA and WBC on the Sulham Brook to reduce risk of flooding at Briars Close and Bourne Road. WBC has also constructed a flood defence wall along the western perimeter of the School and Briars Close. Taking account of near floods that have occurred since 2007, WBC is liaising with the EA on further potential measures at Sulham Brook and the River Pang. CLOSED
4	Any Category 1 responder taking steps to prepare its incident/control room for an anticipated emergency should inform partner	all Category 1 responders Civil Contingencies	In 2008 this was reflected in the Council's Major Incident Plan. (Activation and EOC Sections) It has is also in the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (TV LRF)

No.	Recommendation	Owned By	Status Prior to Floods 13/14
	organisations of its intention.		MAP. An email group for activation has been put in place. CLOSED
5	The Environment Agency should work to provide more localised warnings of flooding, including to responding agencies.	Environment Agency	The flood alert areas have been changed since 2007 including Purley on Thames which has its own alert area. Locations for monitors are reviewed at least annually by the EA. CLOSED
6	A national framework should be developed for the forecast and warning of flash and groundwater flooding.	Environment Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New flood alert system in place • New Flood Forecasting in place providing a daily likelihood of flooding including type. CLOSED
7	Information and communication technology options should be examined to assist in the management of large numbers of incident related calls.	non-blue light Category 1 responders	<p>West Berkshire Council's contact centre and the Civil Contingencies Team have progressed information sharing through the ELM System in order to ensure emerging issues are identified early.</p> <p>In addition there are now projectors available in the Contact Centre in order that the staff can quickly review the situation as it takes place in order that more accurate information can be shared.</p> <p>On the TV LRF website – Members area there is a new Daily reporting system in place.</p> <p>The new National Resilience Extranet is due to be available from Jan 10, but is being trialled in Nov 09. There is an information management system available on this secure IT system costs etc being determined</p> CLOSED
8	The use and deployment of 'Airwave' radios and other appropriate systems by non-blue light Category 1 responders should be examined to allow better communication between organisations at incident sites.	all Category 1 responders	<p>4 x Airwave sets were purchased by WBC in 2012 – allowing for long distance communications with WBC and other agencies if needed in a secure environment.</p> <p>8 x local area radios have been purchased to support local area requirements of officers when operating in the same area.</p> CLOSED
9	Public engagement should be actively sought to ensure that their expectations of responding agencies in the event of a future incident are realistic. Informing householders of what they	Environment Agency, West Berkshire Council Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is currently on-going with a recently revised Template Parish Plans for emergencies in order that they can be engaged and support the overall response. Part of these plans should be the inclusion of a flood plan.

No.	Recommendation	Owned By	Status Prior to Floods 13/14
	can do for themselves along with encouragement to register for flood warnings should feature strongly. Consideration should also be given to the creation of local flood forums.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflets and info available on the Councils website. • Some difficulties with this action due to lack of support from communities. • Flood Forums initiated (some post 2007 some more recently in 2012 due to lack of interest for some communities. • Other flood forums commencing. ONGOING
10	The locations of vulnerable people, along with their particular needs, held by the Emergency Operations Centre should be matched with areas known to be at risk from flooding.	West Berkshire Council Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable people plan in place • Sharing of data still an area of concern esp with utilities. • WBC has a good system of reviewing own clients and engaging with others to ensure our vulnerable clients are looked after. • Engagement with Care Homes and Providers has taken place with more planning and exercising to take place annually. • Local communities more engaged into the process via flood wardens and parishes. • RSLs more engaged in process. ONGOING
11	A designated Chief Officer should always be available for decision making in the early stages of an emerging incident.	West Berkshire Council Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now in place with notification as to when the CEO is not available. • Reflected MIP CLOSED
12	Police and other category 1 responders should ensure that their emergency plans contain systems and processes for the proactive review of resource allocation during sustained and widespread incidents.	all Category 1 responders Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is reflected in the Council's Major Incident Plan (EOC Section) • There is a Berkshire & Thames Valley LA Mutual Aid Agreement • A list of assets held by LA's across TV is available on LRF website CLOSED
13	Updates of information subject to frequent change, for example contact information, should be scheduled at least annually. Procedures to record changes as they occur	all Category 1 responders Civil Contingencies	System in place and reviewed quarterly. CLOSED

No.	Recommendation	Owned By	Status Prior to Floods 13/14
	should also be established.		
14	District and Parish Councillors should be utilised to provide local knowledge and appropriate assistance in their local areas, acting as EOC 'eyes and ears' on the ground, in the event of localised incidents.	West Berkshire Council Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action card in Members Handbook Annual Training available Reflective Jackets issued. <p>CLOSED</p>
15	All staff and District and Town/Parish Councillors, should be clearly identifiable at incident scenes and rest centres.	West Berkshire Council, Parish and Town Councils Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflective Jackets issued to ward members but not Town & parish Councils. Advisory info given to Town & Parish Councils <p>CLOSED</p>
16	All Parish and Town Councils should develop their own emergency plans.	West Berkshire Council, Parish and Town Councils Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Templates created Training Provided Individual meetings attended Can only advice and support but not force communities to have plans. Recent increase in requests for support. <p>ONGOING</p>
17	All Parish and Town Councils should identify specific measures to mitigate the effect of future flood events. These should include, but not be limited to, subscription to the Environment Agency's flood warning service and the identification of flood wardens.	Parish and Town Councils Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several communities along flood risk areas have flood wardens As part of flood forums check undertaken re sign up to loodline service. <p>ONGOING</p>
18	More West Berkshire Council staff should receive Emergency Operation Centre, response and rest centre training.	West Berkshire Council Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing project 2 x training sessions per year on into to EP including EOC Ongoing training programme set out annually <p>ONGOING</p>
19	Business continuity plans should be amended to reflect the reality that in prolonged incidents staff diverted to deal them will not be available	West Berkshire Council (Internal Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate and BC plans in place. <p>ONGOING</p>

No.	Recommendation	Owned By	Status Prior to Floods 13/14
	to carry out their normal duties.	Continuity)	
20	Responsibility for evacuation from property should be clarified at a local level. This should be recorded in the Emergency Plan and communicated to all Category 1 responders and the public.	West Berkshire Council Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO one can be forced to leave their property except in terrorism incidents. Advice can be provided but no one can be forced • TV LRF evacuation plan in place CLOSED
21	The policy to cover the use, storage locations and deployment of sandbags should be objectively reviewed in light of the events of July. The arrangements should be reflected in the Major Incident Plan and communicated to the public and other stakeholders.	West Berkshire Council Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no statutory duty to provide sandbags by the Council. Instead owners of properties should take their own precautions in order to flood protect their property. • A sandbag Policy was approved by Individual Decision CLOSED
22	All Category 1 responders should ensure that they have appropriate plans, equipment and facilities in place to be able to communicate with isolated residents who may not have access to the usual communications channels.	All Category 1 responders Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an ongoing project due to changes in communication means. • A TV LRF Warning & Informing Plan is in place. • Via Flood wardens and Parish/Ward Members a means of communication has been employed. • Difficult to communicate with everyone ONGOING
23	Emergency plans should be reviewed to ensure that the media is informed effectively.	all Category 1 responders Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thames Valley Media Plan • Reflected in the Council's Major Incident Plan (Media Section). • Key staff have attended media training in Jan 08. CLOSED
24	Consideration should be given to establishing measures that would allow Parish and Town Councils to make temporary and local road closures.	Department for Transport, Thames Valley Police, West Berkshire Council (Highways)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current legislation only permits closures of roads by Highways Authority Officers or the Police Officers. CLOSED
25	Procedures should be established to ensure that actions taken by local incident commanders do not have unforeseen consequences elsewhere.	all Category 1 responders Civil Contingencies	<p>Clarified in the Major Incident Plan for the EOC Controller to be aware. Arrangements are in place for teleconferencing and video links with Thames Valley Police and other agencies in order that cross border issues are less likely.</p> <p>This will be further addressed through EOC training.</p> CLOSED

No.	Recommendation	Owned By	Status Prior to Floods 13/14
26	All emergency school closure decisions should be taken in consultation with the Local Education Authority.	West Berkshire Council, all West Berkshire schools (Education)	There is an established process for communication and support when a school is faced with a potential closure situation. During a severe weather event the service increases monitoring and communication with schools. This further supports decisions to be made in a consultative way. However, the final decision lies with the Headteacher. There is a 'school closure' e-mail address for schools to use to notify Education Service of closure or risk of closure. Officers have also attended Head Teachers meetings to discuss and promote the process. CLOSED
27	All schools should review their emergency plans to ensure that lessons learnt during the flooding are reflected, particularly those around media management.	all West Berkshire schools (Education)	All schools are actively encouraged to review plans following incidents with support from the Education Service. Since 2007 this has been supported by action cards and amendments to emergency plan templates provided by the Education Service. Media course were run in Jan 08 with a full day session being dedicated to teachers. CLOSED
28	The role of the Recovery Working Group should be explained to all community stakeholders to ensure that normality is restored as quickly as possible	West Berkshire Council (Civil Contingencies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dec 2008 a Thames Valley LRF Recovery Protocol was adopted. • Staff training undertaken • Exercised in 2012 and 2014 CLOSED
29	GOSE should continue to be involved in the formulation of emergency response and recovery plans.	GOSE (Civil Contingencies)	GOSE (now DCLG RED) are fully integrated into the planning, responding and recovery aspect of Emergency Planning. They are also a regular attendee at multi-agency planning meetings. CLOSED
30	Council Tax relief should be considered for those who do not have full use of their homes	West Berkshire Council (Council Tax)	A policy is in place with a review process available should there be a need to extend void properties after an emergency. CLOSED
31	The recommendations from lessons learnt exercises should be critically examined and resources made available for their implementation and action where appropriate.	all Category 1 responders (Civil Contingencies)	This is standard practice as was shown after Purley floods 2003, Ufton Nervet Train Crash 2004, flooding in 2007, Gas Leak 2008, snow events 2009/10 etc. Due to scale this can vary from a hot debrief session to a more formalised process.

No.	Recommendation	Owned By	Status Prior to Floods 13/14
			<p>This is reflected in Major Incident Plan the outcomes and lessons identified are build into practice and proceedings and updates placed in the Major Incident Plan.</p> <p>CLOSED</p>
32	District and Parish Councillors should have sight of and contribute to any proposed actions having effect on their areas of responsibility.	<p>all Category 1 responders</p> <p>Civil Contingencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities have been clarified through the Major Incident Plan action cards for Councillors, (consultation is on-going on the action cards as part of the MIP review) the EOC Controller and the Crisis Management Team. • The process would normally be for communications to be via the Crisis Management Team (CMT) where the leader and relevant ward Councillors would be present. • In an incident with a wide geographic then the Group Executives would have a key role in ensuring Councillors were informed. • It should be noted however that at the start of a major incident things can move very fast with decisions having to be made quickly in order to save life, property etc. To this end it may not always be possible to engage before an action is taken with the Councillors affected. This would also be the case if the decisions were being made at the Strategic Coordinating Group, Gold. <p>CLOSED</p>
33	The actions identified in the West Berkshire Council Highways and Transport Service report, once costed and prioritised for implementation, should be subject to consultation with Parish and Town Councils and to public review by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Commission.	<p>West Berkshire Council</p> <p>(Highways + others to be determined on conclusion of the report)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reports were completed and actions progressed. • All Councils were consulted during the report writing phase. • The programme was being progressed as quickly as possible subject to the funding available each year. <p>CLOSED</p>
34	The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment should be amended to incorporate risk from flash and groundwater flooding, as well as flooding from rivers.	<p>West Berkshire Council</p> <p>(Planning)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SFRA project was reviewed prior to completion to take account of information from the July 07 flooding and has been amended accordingly. • The SFRA was approved by Members at the LDF Working Group in September 08. • It will be amended should there be further significant flooding events. • It will be amended should there be further significant flooding events

No.	Recommendation	Owned By	Status Prior to Floods 13/14
			CLOSED
35	A Land Drainage Policy should be developed to cover all aspects of the management of drainage (main rivers, surface water and foul sewers, highway drainage, watercourses).	West Berkshire Council (Highways)	A new Land Drainage policy covering non-main river watercourses and roadside ditches was adopted by the Council 2009. CLOSED
36	A recognised central authority should be established to determine the location, ownership and responsibility for all aspects of drainage.	Government Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflected in the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 Info in website & leaflet CLOSED
37	Statutory authorities should work with riparian owners to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities and the impact that they can have to mitigate the effects of flooding.	Environment Agency, West Berkshire Council, Town and Parish Councils (Highways)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is being carried out in a number of ways including through the Land Drainage Policy, on-going work with the Town and Parish Councils, leaflets, updated websites and work with specific landowners. It is worth stating however that identifying all riparian owners is a mammoth task especially when large stretches are involved and potential legal action. A leaflet has been produced to provide advice to Riparian Owners. ONGOING
38	Guidance should be issued to Parish and Town Councils or communities wishing to undertake maintenance on waterways, especially in sites of special scientific interest, on what is environmentally acceptable and what is not.	Environment Agency Civil Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information issued to communities Demonstrations undertaken ONGOING
39	Enforcement action should be taken against riparian owners in the event of non-compliance with their maintenance responsibilities.	Environment Agency, West Berkshire Council (Highways)	A Land Drainage Policy is has been established allowing the Council to enforce riparian landowner responsibilities with respect to the maintenance of roadside ditches and other ordinary watercourses CLOSED
40	Maintenance and cleaning schedules should be published to demonstrate active management of resources and to inform	Environment Agency, Thames Water, West Berkshire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is schedule which has been agreed with the contractor in order to resource the programme. The schedule in a user friendly format on the website

No.	Recommendation	Owned By	Status Prior to Floods 13/14
	public debate on the costs when weighed against the benefits.	(Highways)	CLOSED
41	Agencies should develop and undertake regular inspection regimes for drainage systems.	Thames Water, West Berkshire Council (Highways/ Projects Teams)	The surface water sewers in Thatcham (owned by Thames Water) have been recorded on the Council's register of flood defence assets as required under the FWMA. The Council undertakes cyclic cleansing of gullies and reactive maintenance on highway drainage systems. CLOSED
42	Although local practice already includes them, water companies should be statutory consultees on all planning developments where the impact on the existing drainage infrastructure is likely to be considerable.	Government Civil Contingencies	The Government is reluctant to increase the number of statutory consultees with regards to planning applications. Representations will continue to be made ONGOING
43	If required, within the planning development process developer contributions, (S106) money should be sought to increase drainage capacity.	West Berkshire Council (Planning)	It is not legally possible to request S106 contribution for this purpose. Drainage issues on site or that will arise as a result of the proposed development is a material consideration in determining the proposal and should be mitigated against on site and not through a financial contribution. CLOSED
44	The Council should support the general recommendations made in the reports of Sir Michael Pitt, the Local Government Association, Gloucestershire County Council and Hull City Council on climate change and flooding.	West Berkshire Council Civil Contingencies	These are being reviewed by the WBC Flood Action Group, the Thames Valley Group and the Regional Flood Group. If there are any lessons identified to be of additional value to WBC then this will be highlighted. CLOSED
45	Advice should be given to farmers on actions they can take to mitigate the effects of flooding.	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Civil Contingencies	Management of land is a DEFRA and EA responsibility. However there is a link with OSC 42 above as a result via Town and Parish Councils and other work with NFU etc all working to improve land drainage and flooding matters. ONGOING

Appendix B Professional Partners Survey Report

The primary aim of the consultation was to seek the views of other professional partner responders involved in the flooding response to help identify potential areas of improvement in the way the Council responds to emergencies, to gauge how other responders viewed the response of the Council and other agencies; Responses were collected via an online survey and on hard copies.

A total of 39 people responded to the survey. Due to the low number of respondents, the findings of this survey can not be extrapolated or be considered as representative of all responders.

A number of questions were set in order to determine these points. All the responses were inputted into the online survey directly by responders.

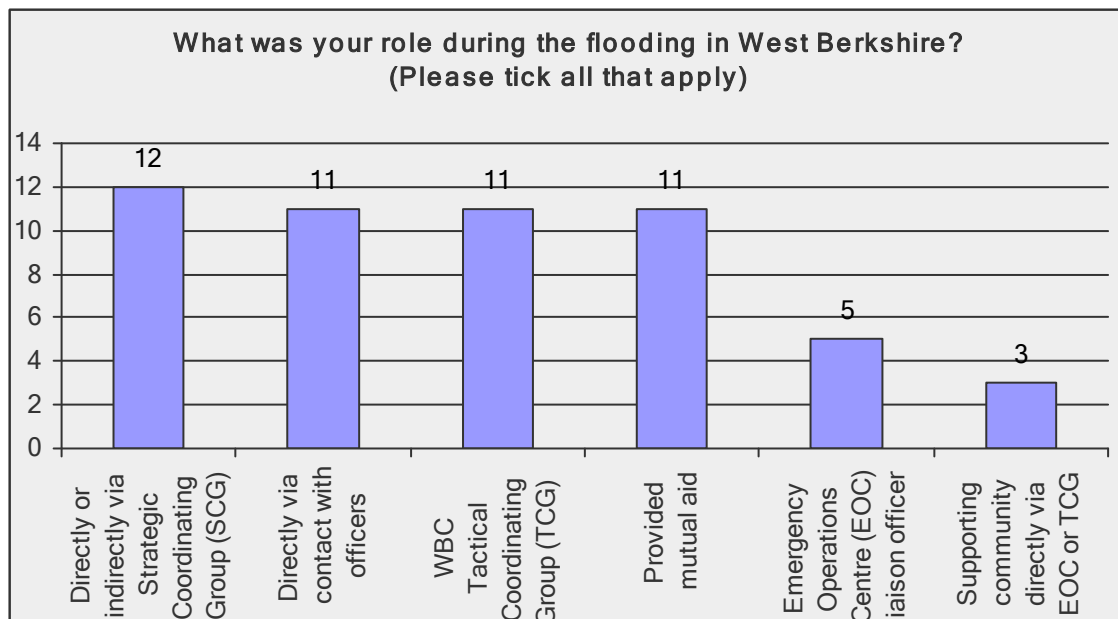
What agencies responded and what did they do during the adverse weather in West Berkshire?

39 people responded to the survey from the agencies set out below:

Answer Options	Response Count
Other Local Authority	7
Thames Valley Police (TVP)	6
Environment Agency	5
Military	4
AA Sort	3
Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE)	3
British Telecoms (BT)	2
Sovereign Housing Association	2
Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service (RBFRS)	2
Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)	1
First Great Western	1
Highways Agency	1
NHS England area team (TV)	1
Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)	1
Thames Water	1
Vodafone	1
Voluntary Groups	0
Network Rail	0
South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS)	0
Public Health England	0
Berkshire Public Health Core Team	0

There is therefore a reasonable spread of different agencies who responded to the survey.

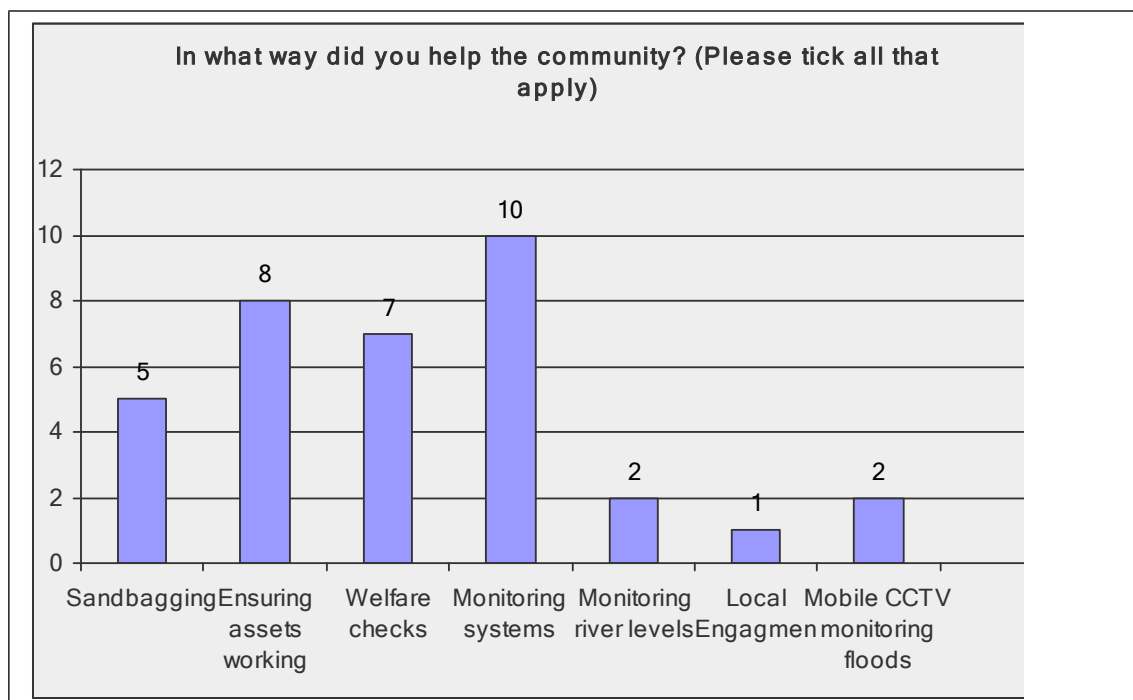
1. The roles that the responders undertook during the floods in West Berkshire were:



The responses to this question demonstrate that the responders were operating in a different number of roles to support the West Berkshire area and therefore their feedback can provide information from a wide perspective.

2. Responders were asked if they were supporting the community on the ground and if so doing what.

10 responders from 29 confirmed they had been operating in the communities directly.



The work they were doing in the community included a range of roles and suggests that the 10 responders to this question were doing a variety of tasks.

PP Key Points/Comments 1:

- A wide range of agencies were involved in the multi-agency response
- The roles they undertook were a spread of Command & Control arrangements and supporting the communities
- When in the communities they undertook a wide range of tasks.

How did professional partners rate the command and control arrangements in West Berkshire and how could they be improved?

Since this was the first time that the EOC, and the wider command and control had been operating for over 2 weeks and because the TCG was in the Council Offices a number of questions were posed to assess any improvements for multi-agency working to put in place.

3. Initially responders who had been in the EOC were asked to **rate some specific elements of the EOC**.

Only 3 responders confirmed they had worked in the EOC, 2 of whom provided the feedback on the arrangements.

Answer Options	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
Initial setting up	0	1	1	0	0
Room size	0	0	2	0	0
Room layout	0	0	2	0	0
Chairs	0	1	1	0	0
ICT equipment	0	0	1	1	0
Telecoms equipment (Phones)	0	2	0	0	0
Airwave Radios	0	1	0	0	0
Information management system (Log)	0	0	1	1	0
Mapping	1	0	1	0	0
Support provided by WBC	2	0	0	0	0

With only 2 responders there is insufficient detail for full analysis. It was however noted the areas that was deemed to be poor were the Information Management System and ICT equipment

4. Responders who had been in the WBC TCG were asked to rate some specific elements of the WBC TCG.

11 of the 37 responders to the question had worked in the WBC TCG.

Of the 11 that had been in the WBC TCG 9 provided feedback:

Answer Options	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
Initial setting up	2	4	1	0	0
Room size	4	4	1	0	0
Room layout	2	6	1	0	0
Chairs	2	6	1	0	0
ICT equipment	3	1	5	0	0
Telecoms equipment (Phones)	2	5	2	0	0
Airwave Radios	1	4	1	0	0
Information management system (Log)	0	2	3	1	0
Mapping	0	6	2	0	0
Support provided by WBC	6	3	0	0	0

All responders gave positive feedback in general terms to most aspects of the WBC TCG. The one exception was the Information Management System.

Suggestions were made to improving the WBC TCG which included wifi capability for responding agencies and improved internet capacity. This is also reflected in the table above where 5 of the 9 responders placed the ICT as only fair. Therefore this suggests that the ICT and an Information Management System (IMS) are both areas to consider improving.

Other improvements suggested more use of the interactive mapping and perhaps setting up the WBC TCG earlier.

5. Responders who had been in the WBC Teleconferencing/Meeting Room were asked to rate some specific elements of the WBC Teleconferencing/Meeting Room.

11 of 35 responders to this question had used the WBC Teleconferencing/Meeting Room

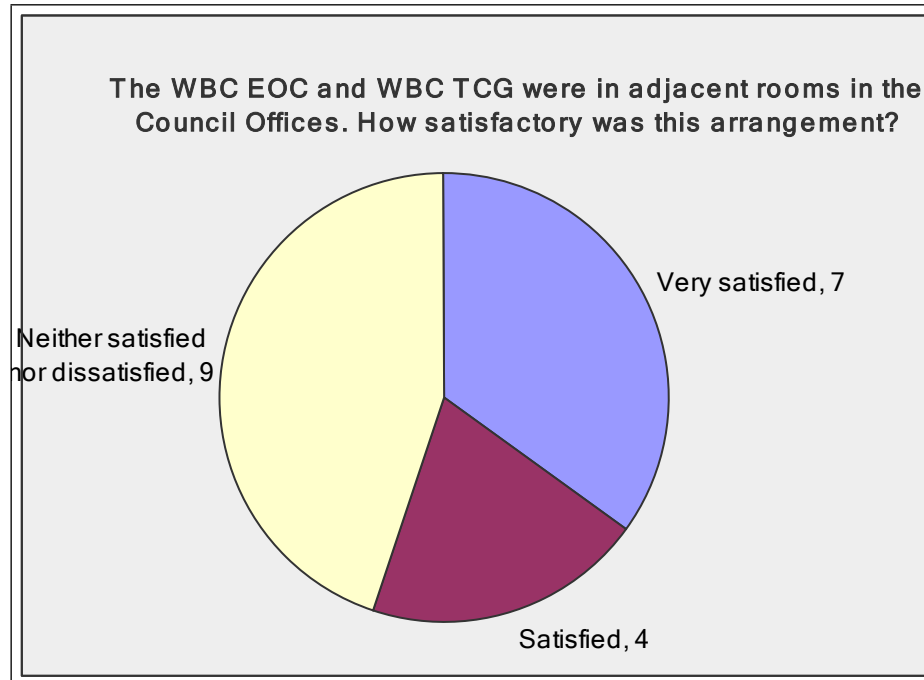
Answer Options	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
Initial setting up	2	8	1	0	0
Room size	0	4	5	1	0
Room layout	0	5	5	0	0
Chairs	0	7	3	0	0
ICT equipment	0	1	5	0	0
Telecoms equipment (Phones)	1	6	1	0	0
Airwave Radios	0	2	3	0	0
Information management system (Log)	0	1	3	0	0
Mapping	0	3	2	0	0
Support provided by WBC	4	4	1	0	0

The majority of the 13 responders to the suitability of the room found it to be good or fair. 1 responder found the room size to be poor.

4 responders fed back in relation to improvement:

The overriding issue was the size of the room. It worked but if more people were to be involved then a different room would be necessary. However it was recognised that the proximity to the EOC and WBC TCG was an advantage.

6. Responders were asked how satisfied they were with the WBC EOC and WBC TCG being in adjacent rooms in the Councils Offices.



20 responders answered this question and not one was dissatisfied.

7. Responders were asked if they had any further comments by way of suggestions with respect to the arrangements with EOC/WBC TCG etc.

Comments were received from 6 responders which are summarised below:

The WBC TCG set up was very good, allowed good communication between agencies and specific expert staff which allowed quick and effective decision making. Comment was made that it was a better set up than at the police station.

All were impressed with the attitude of WBC staff

There were some ICT problems but that was recognised as the agency issue to resolve.

BT suggested that they should have been contacted via the SCG rather than by WBC TCG directly.

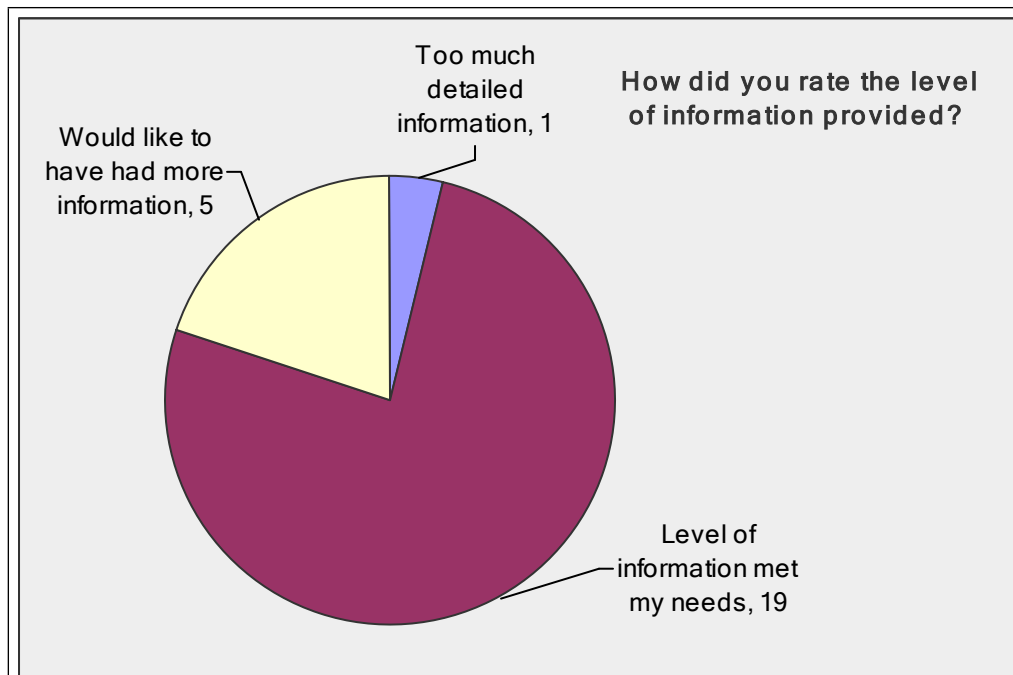
PP Key Points/Comments 2:

- The Command and Control arrangements worked well with the EOC and WBC TCG collocated in the Council Offices
- Overall the majority of aspects of the operational needs were met.
- The areas of improvement include the Information Management System and external agencies connections to internet.

How did professional partners rate the information shared with them by West Berkshire and how could they be improved?

Emails were sent out on a daily basis to update professional partners directly and indirectly involved in WBC area as to what was happening in West Berkshire area.

8. Responders were therefore asked **how they rated the information**.



25 responders answered this question with 19 (76%) confirming the level of information met their needs.

On asked how to improve the information 7 responders made comment as follows:

- 1 comment was in relation to a mapping format that could not be read.
- 1 related to considering a template to be used and sent out
- 5 related to not receiving the information.

PP Key Points/Comments 4:

- The majority of responders believed the information sent met their needs.

Overall what did the professional partners involved consider that the Council did well and what could be improved?

9. Responders were asked what WBC did well.

4 responders made comments as follows:

- Responded positively to community needs (2)
- Acted as a link between all agencies sharing information so planning could take place (2)
- Updated partners (1)
- Wifi worked well (1)

10. Responders were asked what WBC could look to improve.

4 responders made comments as follows:

- Follow procedures
- More liaison officers out on site
- If running community drop ins then more detailed planning needed
- Over weekends need to monitor general welfare of staff in the Offices

PP Key Points/Comments 5:

- The feedback was positive especially in relation to responding to community needs.

Recommendations:

- i. The roles of the other partners in the response should be considered as detail in the WBC Flood Plan
- ii. An Information Management System to operate in the EOC and have the ability to share information with the other partners in other locations should be considered.
- iii. The WBC Operations Plans should be update to include and option for the WBC TCG to operate from the Council Offices in the future.
- iv. The format of the information shared with professional partners should be reviewed
- v. The professional partners email group should be reviewed.

Appendix C West Berkshire Council Staff Survey Report

The aim of this consultation was to seek the views of council Staff on how they viewed the way the Council prepared, responded and recovered from the Adverse Weather event including: how the command and control arrangements were; if the communications were effective; and how critical and essential business continued in order to help identify potential areas of improvement in the way the Council responds to emergencies.

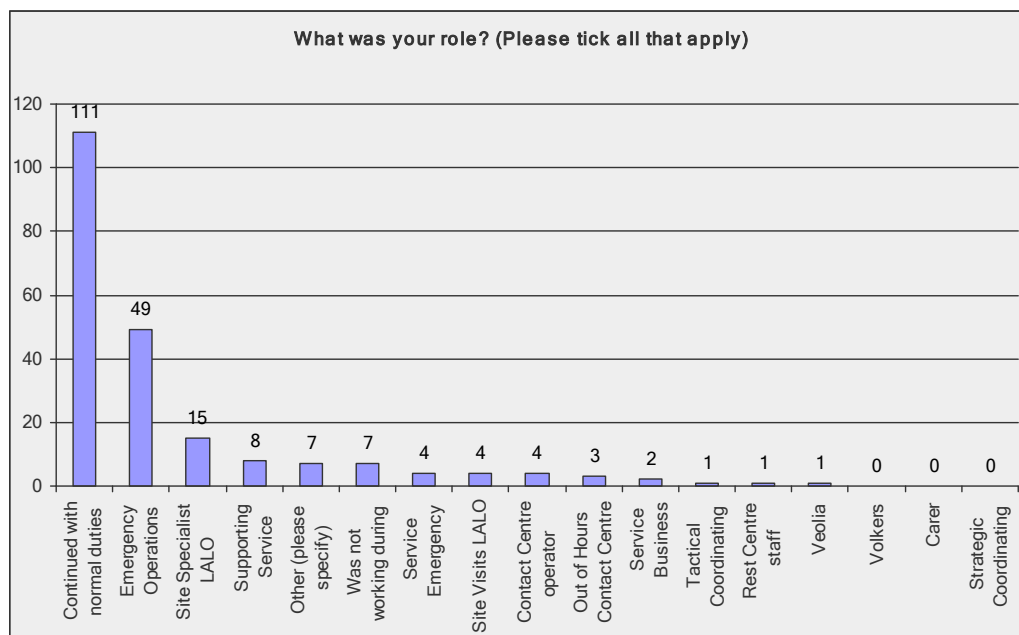
Responses were collected via an online survey and on hard copies.

161 of the Council's 1,544 staff responded to the survey (10.4%). The survey also included the contacts for out-of-hours contact centre, Highways and Waste Contractors.

(Due to the low number of respondents, the findings of this survey can not be extrapolated or be considered as representative.)

How did staff rate the command and control arrangements in West Berkshire and how could they be improved?

1. Staff were asked what their role was during the floods?



Of those that answered the question, the majority 69% continued with normal duties others were involved in a range of support duties to the response. The next biggest involvement of staff (30%) was in the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), followed by staff undertaking site visits as specialists (7%).

For the 161 responders however, there were 217 roles chosen. This suggests that most of the responders did a combination of their normal duties and at least one other role during the event.

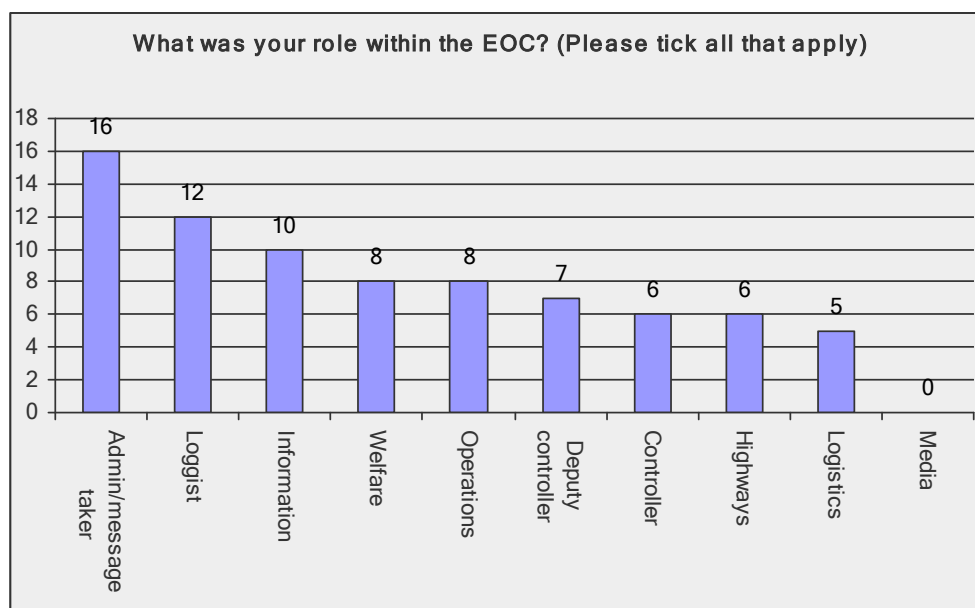
In relation to the other roles staff undertook this included acting as a point of contact in their community to check on the local area, being available but not actually being called upon and some post flooding work with those affected.

The above indicates that many staff who volunteered to support the response were also doing their own work when not on shift.

STAFF - Key Points 1:

- Consideration should be given to what roles staff could undertake in their own communities – as part of the community response.

2. The staff who advised they had worked in the EOC were asked what their role was within the EOC.



Of the 161 responders, 61 (38%), confirmed they worked in the EOC this was from a total of 176 staff members who worked in the EOC (from shift rota) a response of 35% of EOC staff.

There are a number of roles in the EOC. The consultees were asked to identify what roles they had undertaken. 61 responders undertook 78 roles. This suggests there is a degree of flexibility in the staff involved in the roles they can perform. The responses also indicated that the majority of responders undertook the administrative type roles – message handler/loggist etc.

STAFF Key Points 2:

- The spread of roles identified in the feedback reflected the spread of roles and staff numbers during the event as detailed in the log.
- The number of Admin / Loggist staff in particular is a point to note in that in order to keep on top of the calls coming in and managing the process it was very resource intensive.
- This admin process should be reviewed for future events to ensure the process is clearer and the correct resources are considered to support the specialist roles and manage the response in the community effectively.

3. In order to identify lessons about the basic operational procedures of the EOC the **survey responders were asked to rate a number of elements relating to the EOC.**

Answer Options	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	No of responders
The layout of the EOC	9	33	14	3	0	59
The equipment in the EOC	6	29	21	3	0	59
The Log	3	18	23	11	1	56
The means of sharing info and tasking members in the EOC	3	21	20	10	4	58
How clear were your responsibilities in the EOC	4	19	17	13	4	57
The individual role log books.	2	9	23	13	5	52
Situation update received on arrival in EOC	4	20	18	10	4	56
Situation updates received during your time in the EOC	7	25	17	6	2	57

59 staff of the 61 who identified as being in the EOC responded to this question.

The majority found all the options to be very good, good or fair however there were some who believed there were areas of concern.

Option	Poor or very poor	Good or very good	Difference
The layout of the EOC	6%	71%	65
The equipment in the EOC	6%	60%	54
The Log	20%	38%	18
The means of sharing info and tasking members in the EOC	21%	41%	20
How clear were your responsibilities in the EOC	30%	40%	10
The individual role log books.	37%	21%	-16
Situation update received on arrival in EOC	25%	43%	18
Situation updates received during your time in the EOC	14%	56%	42

As a result from these figures the areas to focus on are set out below in order of priority:

1. The individual role log books
 2. Clarity of roles and responsibilities in the EOC
 3. The log
 4. Situation update received on arrival in EOC
 5. The means of sharing info and tasking members in the EOC
 6. Situation updates received during your time in the EOC
 7. The equipment in the EOC
 8. The layout of the EOC
4. On asking the responders to the survey what they would suggest would be improvements to be made in the EOC the responses reflected the outcome of the above.

41 of the 49 responders made comments / suggestions for improvement. On reviewing the comments they broke down into a number of headings as set out below:

Topic Areas	No of responses
Admin Processes	17
How clear were your responsibilities in the EOC	16
Situation update received on arrival in EOC	15
The Log	15
The equipment in the EOC	8
The individual role log books.	6
Training	5
Situation updates received during your time in the EOC	5
The means of sharing info and tasking members in the EOC	3
The layout of the EOC	3
Welfare	3
Staffing	2
Competencies of Officers	2
Health & Safety Concerns	1

The feedback for improvements reflected, to some extent, those already identified which is positive since there were some constructive ideas put forward.

Some specific ideas for improvement included:

- Reviewing the information management system
- Providing a framework for handover takeovers at shift changes and during shifts
- Reviewing the layout and positions of the EOC staff
- Revising all the roles and responsibilities for each role in the EOC and making it available

- More training re EOC
- New log books for each EOC role with clear instructions how to use it.

There were 4 main other groupings including:

- **Admin Processes** these related to improvements by way of managing the EOC such as signing in and out; paperless EOC ideas; a quick guide as to where to find things in the EOC and on shared drives and management of the log.
- **Training** – this was for all staff in all roles
- **Staffing** – this was in relation to additional roles including a support to the operations role, a person overseeing the admin and a Tactical Advisor for the EOC and its running.
- **Competencies of Officers** – specific comments made here were in relation to roles where access and understanding of some ICT systems was necessary e.g. the Welfare role and access to RAISE; it was also suggested that there should be a core team who train, respond and in effect run the EOC rather than having different people in who may not have the skills.
- **Health & Safety Concerns** – the comments related to no H&S briefings when first in the EOC and concerns re breaks.

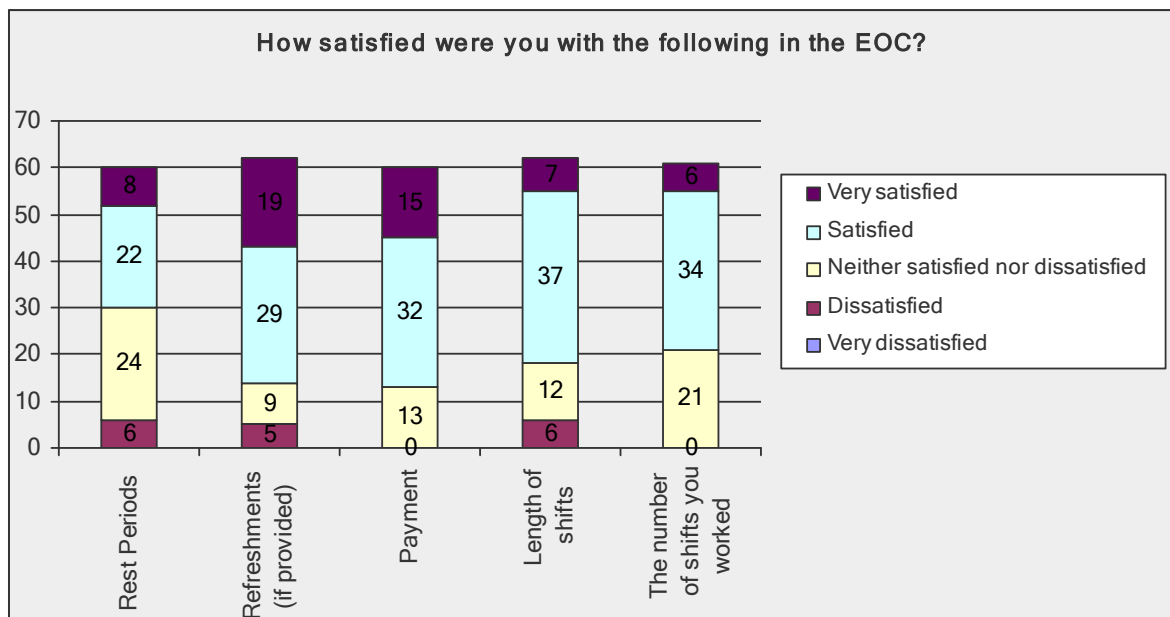
STAFF Key Points 3:

- Whilst there was a lot of feedback in relation to the EOC the majority of feedback was in the good to very good areas and there were comments made about 'enjoying' the experience.
- Staff feedback has provided good suggestions as to how the EOC can be improved.
- The feedback has given an order of priority to review the EOC by way of documentation, set up arrangements and training which should be pursued.

5. It was interesting to note that 3 issues relating specifically to welfare were raised by staff as to how the EOC was operating. This was identified as areas to investigate further therefore the responding staff were asked **how satisfied they were with elements of the EOC relating to welfare and Health & Safety**.

63 staff responded to the question.

Answer Options	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Rest Periods	8	22	24	6	0
Refreshments (if provided)	19	29	9	5	0
Payment	15	32	13	0	0
Length of shifts	7	37	12	6	0
The number of shifts you worked	6	34	21	0	0



The vast majority of responders provided positive feedback to these questions however there were a smaller group (8- 9%) who were dissatisfied with rest periods, the refreshments provided or the lengths of shifts.

25 responders suggested some improvements to the EOC. 10 of these comments related to the log, roles and responsibilities, situation updates, instruction for Liaison Officers etc and followed the feedback as set out in the previous question.

This left 15 responders feeding back in relation to a number of specific items in this question. These have been summarised as set out below:

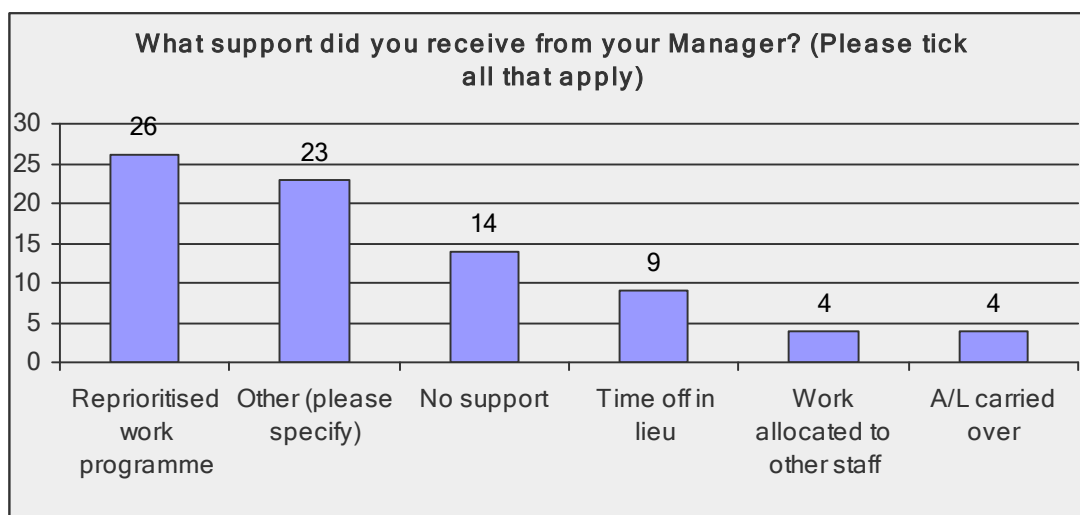
Suggested improvement areas	No of feedback comments	Specific suggestions for improvements
Shifts	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 hours can be a long time when it is busy The staffing of shifts in relation to cancelling some people or extending some staff needs to be considered carefully The times of shift changes needs to be considered to allow some staff to assist by tying in with public transport etc (4am – 12noon/12noon to 8pm/8pm to 4am) Consider the numbers necessary for the night shift – does a full shift need to operate if the TCG is running. Clear booking in and out sheet Shorter shifts if possible –so less staff put off (4 x 6hrs) Consider duty on call staff on at night.
Rest Periods	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure these are clearly set out at the start

		of each shift
Staffing	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make sure everyone takes a break – planned ○ Allocate jobs/shifts on peoples abilities/experience ○ Consider staffing EOC from a core team of people rather than ‘volunteers’
Refreshments	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The support provided was excellent by the post team. ○ Staff could bring their own food.
Training	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More staff trained to work in EOC will allow more to staff the shifts

STAFF Key Points 4:

- There was a significant amount of positive feedback relating to the EOC welfare area.
- A degree of flexibility is needed since every incident is different including the need for 24hour operation, the length of time the EOC needs to operate, the staff that are available etc.

6. Due to the number of staff in the EOC over a prolonged time there were concerns about managing their normal’ workloads therefore the survey responders were asked **what support they received from their manager.**



Of the 66 responders to this question the majority indicates that work was reprioritised (39%). In addition time off was given, work allocated elsewhere and annual leave was carried over.

There were a significant number 35% who indicated 'other' support. On reviewing this however, this may not be deemed to be support but managing time in that the following actions were taken:

- 9 advised support was good or no support needed
- 8 managed their shifts so they did not have an impact on normal work e.g. worked weekends, late or night shifts etc.
- 2 worked additional hours
- 2 started late or finished early if they had been working in EOC
- 2 were content since paid.
- 2 daily contacts were made with the manager

Unfortunately 14 (21%) indicated they got no support from their managers. Only one feedback comment was made in relation to this which suggested that there was perhaps a lack of awareness by some third tier managers and above of the importance of the role in the EOC.

STAFF Key Points 5:

- All managers should recognise that if a major incident is declared then the impact is for the whole council in the response and should manage their service / team accordingly (using their Service Emergency Plan) and support their staff accordingly.

A number of specific questions were asked in relation to the response which particularly linked to the EOC operation, but also related to the wider response. These included:

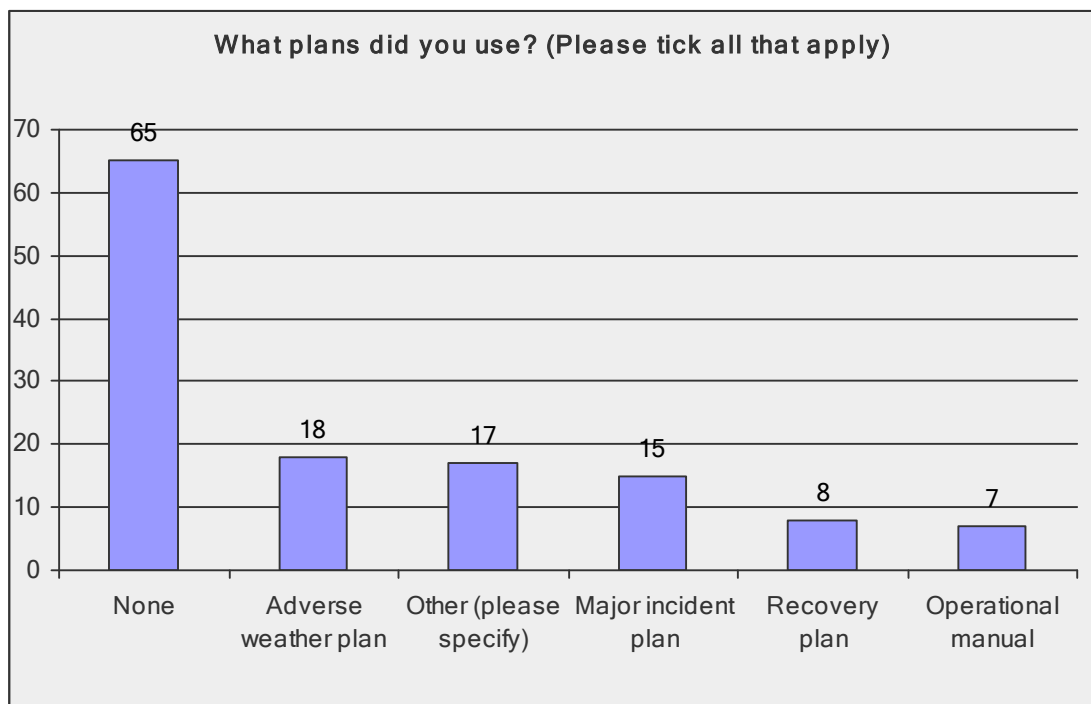
7. Whether staff used the Airwave Radios and their usefulness (following the recommendations of 2007 4 have been purchased).

In response to this 30 responders fed back with 13% (4 people) confirming they used the radios. Of these 4 that used the radios they confirmed that they believed it was an effective means of communication.

STAFF Key Points 6:

- Whilst the usage figures were low for the use of the radios from the total responding to this question it should be noted that within the EOC it was the duty of the Deputy Controller to monitor and use the radio therefore the pool of likely responders to say yes to this question was likely to be small.
- Positively, those that used it all (100%) found them to be effective.

8. What plans staff used in the response and where they found the information needed in order to assess what plans were needed and if people had difficulties finding the relevant information.



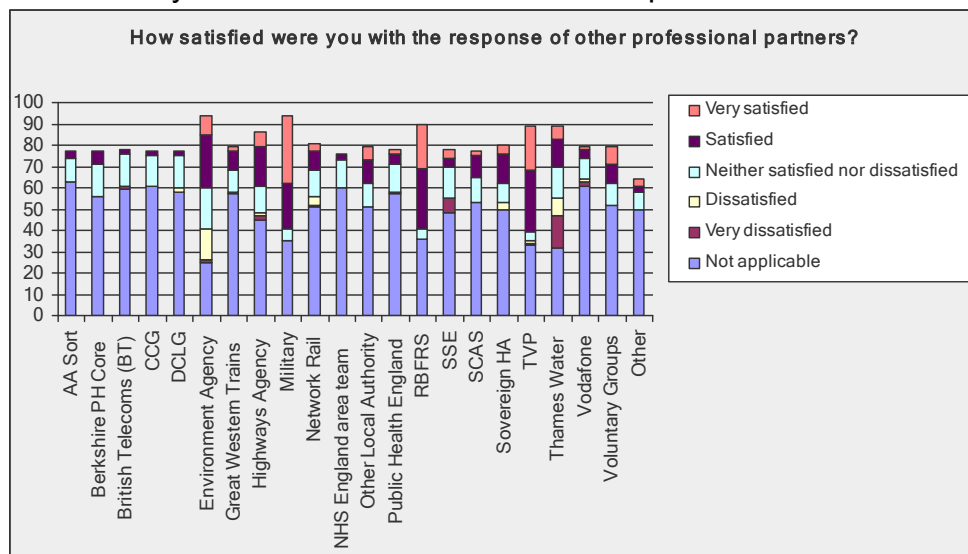
109 staff responded to advise what plans if any they had used therefore the response potentially included a number of staff who were not involved in the response which may be the reason the majority of responders did not use a plan (65). That said of the 17 that said other, 1 person advised about a business continuity plan being implemented, 2 advised they made up their response plan as they went along whereas the other 14 advised they had 'no idea' or 'were not aware of plans'.

On asking where they found the information they needed the responses suggest the question was not clear in that it was meant to find out from those who responded where they got the information they needed to respond. As a result having reviewed the answers 11 of the 19 were discounted since they appeared to refer to where staff got general information. Of the 8 remaining, 100% of them got their information from asking other staff in the EOC.

STAFF Key Points 7:

- There are a huge number of plans that could have been referred to in the response to what plans were used – Thames Valley LRF, Berkshire, West Berkshire and Service Plans (BCM and Service Emergency Plans).
- Despite the likelihood that a number of the responders to the survey may not have needed any specific plans it is disappointing to note how many people used the plans and the percentage (17%) who had no idea there were plans and in effect muddled through.
- The question relating to where staff found the information on plans was unclear resulting in a less accurate response to that intended.
- The feedback provided however in relation to where staff got their information from this tended to be from others in the EOC. The issue with this is IF the person they get the information from is not aware of the plans etc then the cascade of information can be set up incorrectly on day one and passed on.
- This feedback potentially answers some of the issues arising in the EOC re handovers, etc since the detail already exists in plans and in a shared drive accessible for all in the EOC.
- The responses to these 2 questions suggests the plans need to be more accessible in the EOC, some plans need to be shortened into Tactical Plans/Action Cards, more training is necessary and the need for a Tactical Advisor in the EOC is necessary throughout to ensure consistency and support is provided.

9. In any Major Incident the response is going to involve other agencies. This incident was no exception. In order to assess if the staff involved in the response **were satisfied with the response of other professional partners** they were asked to rate the other responders?



How satisfied were you with the response of other professional partners?							
Answer Options	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not applicable	Response Count
AA Sort	0	3	11	0	0	63	77
Berkshire Public Health Core Team	0	6	15	0	0	56	77
British Telecoms (BT)	0	2	15	0	2	59	78
Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)	0	2	14	0	0	61	77
Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)	0	2	15	2	0	58	77
Environment Agency	9	25	19	15	1	25	94
Great Western Trains	2	9	10	1	0	57	79
Highways Agency	7	18	13	1	2	45	86
Military	32	21	6	0	0	35	94
Network Rail	4	9	12	4	1	51	81
NHS England area team (TV)	0	3	13	0	0	60	76
Other Local Authority	6	11	11	0	0	51	79
Public Health England	2	5	13	1	0	57	78
Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service (RBFRS)	21	28	5	0	0	36	90
Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE)	4	4	15	0	7	48	78
South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS)	2	10	12	0	0	53	77
Sovereign Housing Association	4	14	9	3	0	50	80
Thames Valley Police (TVP)	21	29	4	1	1	33	89
Thames Water	6	13	15	8	15	32	89
Vodafone	1	4	10	1	2	61	79
Voluntary Groups	8	9	10	0	0	52	79
Other	3	3	8	0	0	50	64

103 responses were made to this question.

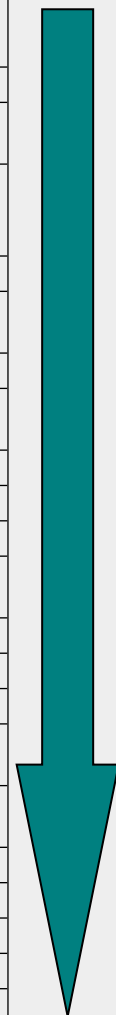
Of the 7 other responders detailed they included:

- Neighbourhood Wardens
- Other Fire & Rescue Services
- Anchor Housing Association
- Bus Companies
- Sainsburys – for provision of water, food and hand gel for distribution.

On reviewing the responses and taking out those that were not applicable and the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied results then the following was established:

Agency	Cat	Code	Very Satisfied/ Satisfied	Dissatisfied/ Very Dissatisfied	Difference/Over all satisfaction
Thames Water	2	U	33%	40%	-7
Scottish and Southern Energy	2	U	27%	23%	4
Department of Communities and Local Government	1	G	11%	11%	0
British Telecoms	2	U	11%	11%	0
Clinical Commissioning Group	2	H	12%	0	12
Vodafone	2	U	28%	11%	17
NHS England area team	1	H	19%	0	19
AA Sort	n/a		21	0	21
Environment Agency	1		49%	23%	26
Network Rail	2	U	43%	17%	26
Berkshire Public Health Core Team	1	H	28	0	28
Public Health England	1	H	33%	5%	28
Other	n/a		43%	0	43
Great Western Trains	2	U	50%	4%	46
South Central Ambulance Service	1	ES	50%	0	50
Sovereign Housing Association	n/a		60%	10%	50
Highways Agency	2		61%	7%	54
Other Local Authority	1	G	61%	0	61
Voluntary Groups	n/a		63%	0	63
Thames Valley Police	1	ES	93%	4%	89
Military	n/a		90%	0	90
Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service	1	ES	91%	0	91

INCREASING SATISFACTION



Code

1	Category 1 responder under Civil Contingencies Act 2004 ¹⁰
2	Category 2 responder under Civil Contingencies Act 2004
U	Utility
G	Government or local Government
H	Health agency/service
ES	Emergency Services

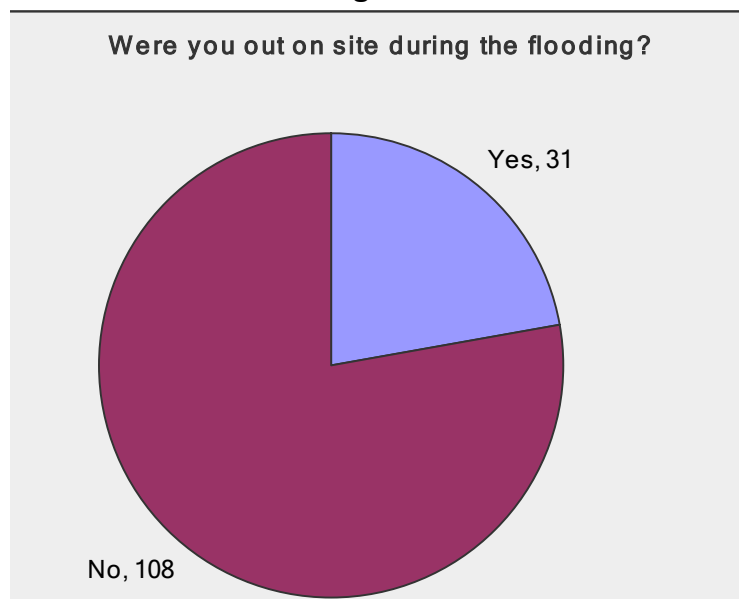
¹⁰ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/36/schedule/2>

STAFF Key Points 8:

- Over 22 agencies were involved in this multi-agency response
- 9 x Cat 1 responders, 8 x cat 2 responders and 5 agencies with no categorisation under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. This means that the 5 with no categorisation there is no legal duty under this legislation to engage in the planning, preparation, information sharing and response to an emergency.
- On grouping responders under Cat 1 & Cat 2 which have the greatest cause for concern then the utility companies and Health agencies received the greatest level of dissatisfaction, along with the Dept of Communities & Local Government.
- Thames Water is the utility requiring the greatest improvement.
- The CCG's re the health responders requiring the greatest improvement.
- Consideration is required at Local, Thames Valley and National level as to how the satisfaction level of utility companies can be improved.
- Having regard to the health agencies these are still relatively new in their formation since the major changes and this was the first time that all elements of health were tested in a major incident response. The results suggest that more understanding and integration is necessary within the health and the multi-agency environments in order to improve the integration and satisfaction in their response.

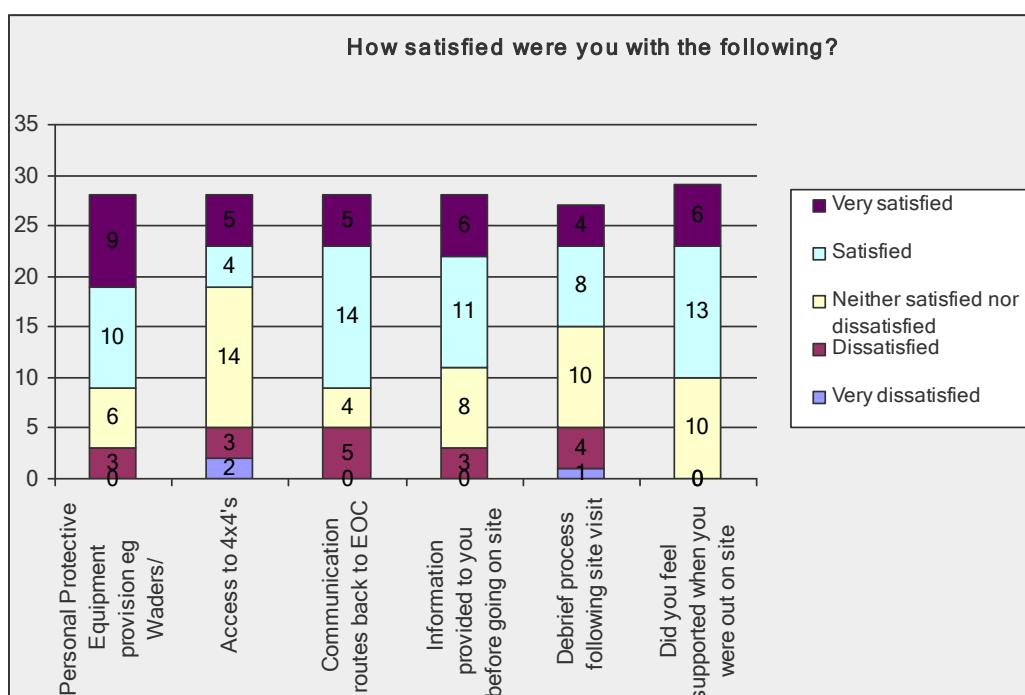
How did staff who were out on site rate the arrangements in place and how could they be improved?

10. In order to understand how the staff rated the arrangements for those who were out on site a number of questions were asked. The first question related to **whether the responder had been out on site during the floods?**



From the 139 responses, 31 staff who were on site during the floods (22% of responders). Therefore the majority of responders to the survey (161) were in the EOC or carrying on normal duties.

11. In order to assess the **level of satisfaction of staff who were on site** as to some key elements of their activities on site they responded as follows:



The majority of the 29 responders to this question were satisfied with the provisions in place:

Answer Options	Very satisfied/ Satisfied	Dissatisfied/ Very dissatisfied	Difference	Order of improvement
Access to 4x4's	9 (32%)	5 (18%)	14	1
Debrief process following site visit	12 (44%)	5 (19%)	43	2
Communication routes back to EOC	19 (67%)	5 (18%)	49	3
Information provided to you before going on site	17 (61%)	3 (11%)	50	4
Personal Protective Equipment provision e.g. Waders/ Wellingtons/Council Reflective Jacket	19 (68%)	3 (11%)	57	5
Did you feel supported when you were out on site	19 (66%)	0	66	6

The order of improvement is set out above. Whilst the top issues was access to 4x4's the next 3 areas of improvement related to information – before going on site, the means of communicating to the EOC when on site and the debrief process thereafter.

12. The staff who had been out on site were asked **what changes they would suggest** to improve future responses. These are summarised below in a number of themes:

Theme (incl no of comments)	Comments
Transport (x3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional access to 4x4 would be useful given the nature of the incident ○ Own cars of staff are not necessarily suitable for the conditions.
Staff resource locations (x3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Signing in and out of staff on site should be more coordinated due to scarce resources, saves doubling up and safety reasons. ○ Knowledge by line managers as to where staff were on site
LA Liaison Officers (LALO) (x3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some specialist officers on site were very busy trying to resolve an issue but regularly public were asking questions of them resulting in the technical work at times being hampered. . ○ Need for LALO in areas to support other specialist officers.
Briefings (x2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communication routes need to be improved. ○ Dedicated EOC lines / emails to feed in and out of.

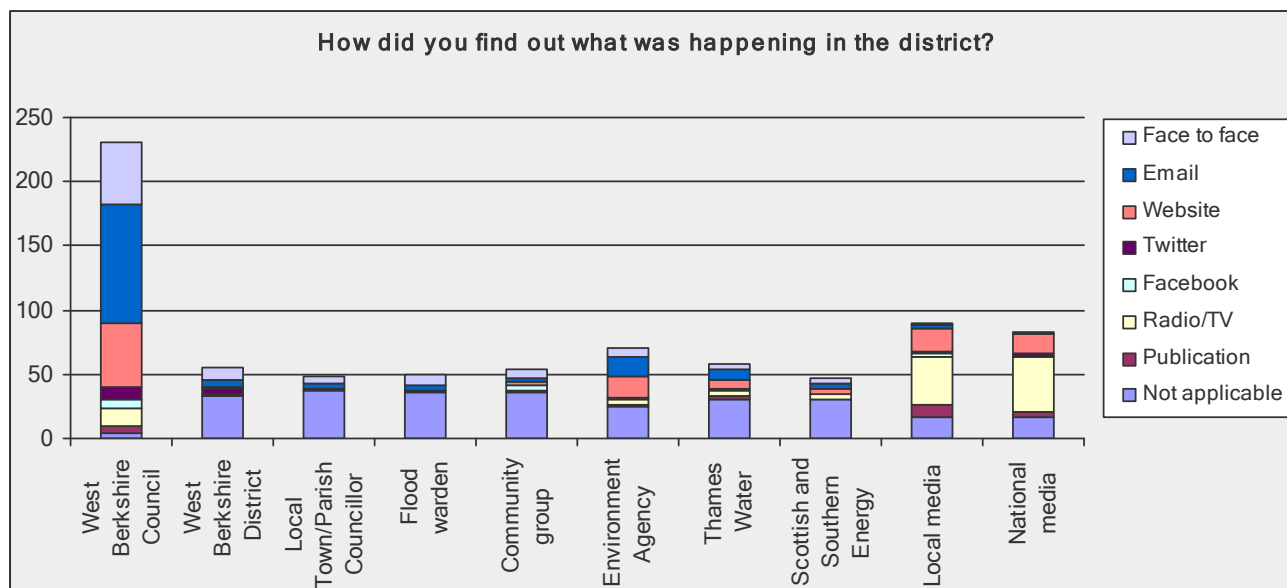
STAFF Key Points 9:

- The staff numbers on site were not an insignificant proportion of the response (22%).
- From the staff rota many of the staff on site where the same staff day in day out –resource issue.
- Specialists on site need support from LALOs so as they can get on with the tasks and LALO's can support the wider community & engage with other responders.
- Management of the officers on site needs to be improved in a number of areas including:
 - Correct transport available for the conditions
 - Coordination from the EOC and / or services if necessary – to ensure support for all officers.
 - Briefings and contacts before, during and after deployment including a clear communication route.
 - Shifts of site staff so people not on site for long periods

How did staff rate the information provided and how could they be improved?

13. In order to engage staff across the Council then communicating with them to provide updates is important As a result the responding staff were asked **how they found out what was happening across the district** in order to assess the best ways of communicating with all staff.

Answer Options	Face to face	Email	Web	Twitter	Facebook	Radio/TV	Publication	N/A	Response Count
West Berkshire Council	48	93	50	10	7	14	5	4	119
West Berkshire District Councillor	9	6	1	4	1	1	0	33	47
Local Town/Parish Councillor	6	5	1	0	0	0	0	37	46
Flood warden	8	5	0	0	0	1	0	36	48
Community group	7	3	2	1	4	0	1	36	48
Environment Agency	6	15	17	1	0	5	1	25	63
Thames Water	4	9	7	1	0	4	2	31	52
Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE)	4	5	4	0	0	3	0	31	46
Local media	2	2	18	2	2	38	9	17	78
National media	2	0	15	2	0	43	5	16	68



From the 120 staff who answered this question, the majority received information from West Berkshire Council, particularly through email, the website and face to face updates following respectively.

The next 2 most common routes for staff getting information from was the Local and National media either on their websites or via the radio/TV.

The Environment Agency was the next agency where staff sourced information.

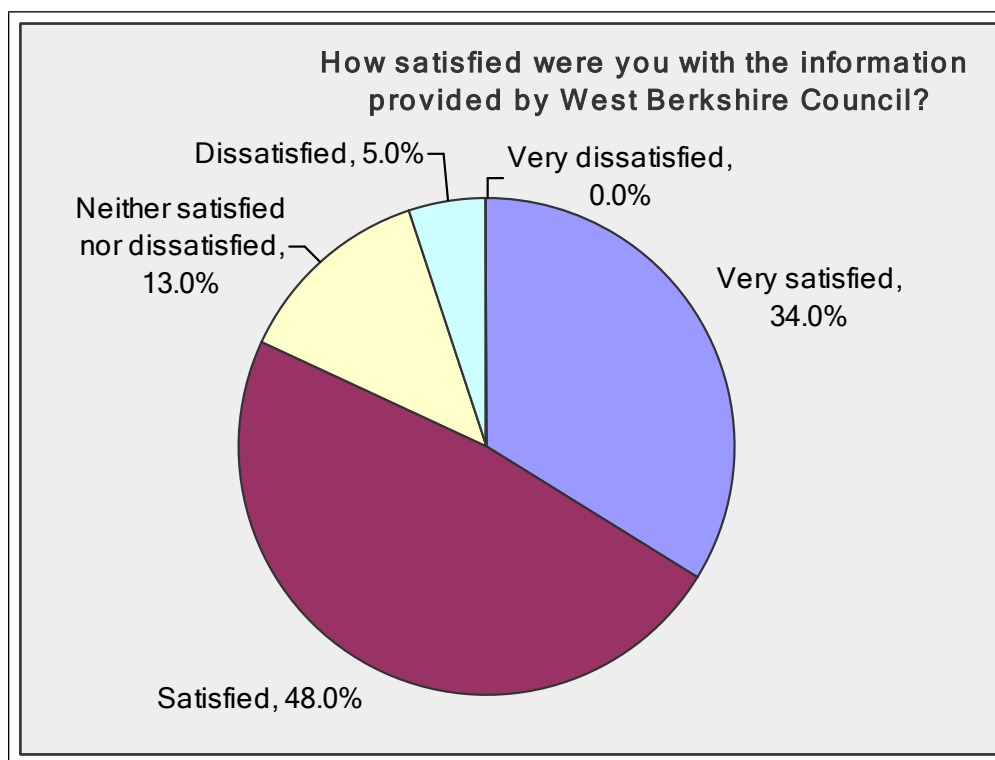
The top 3 means of receiving information was via:

- a. Emails
- b. Websites
- c. Radio & TV

The least common reported means of getting information was via Twitter and Facebook.

14. On asking the responders how satisfied they were with the information provided by West Berkshire Council in order to assess what improvements may be necessary.

121 staff responded to this question.



The majority, 82%, were either very satisfied or satisfied with the information provided. 5% were dissatisfied with none very dissatisfied. This therefore suggests that the information provided internally was useful but it could be improved.

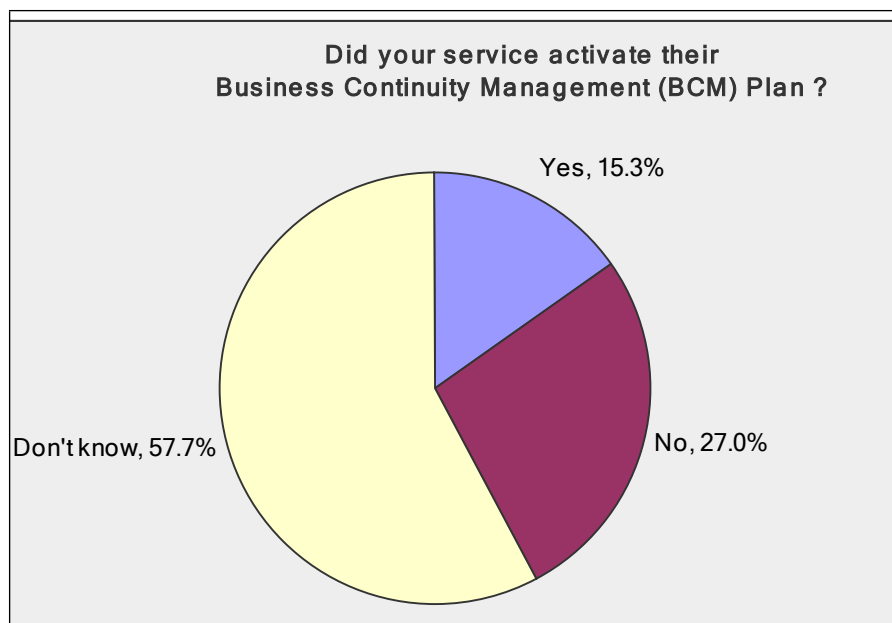
STAFF Key Points 10:

- The main sources of information for Council Staff were Council communications.
- Emails, website and radio / TV were the most common means of receiving information from all sources and therefore ought to be pursued in the future to improve the communications / information more.

How did staff rate the process of continuing businesses as usual?

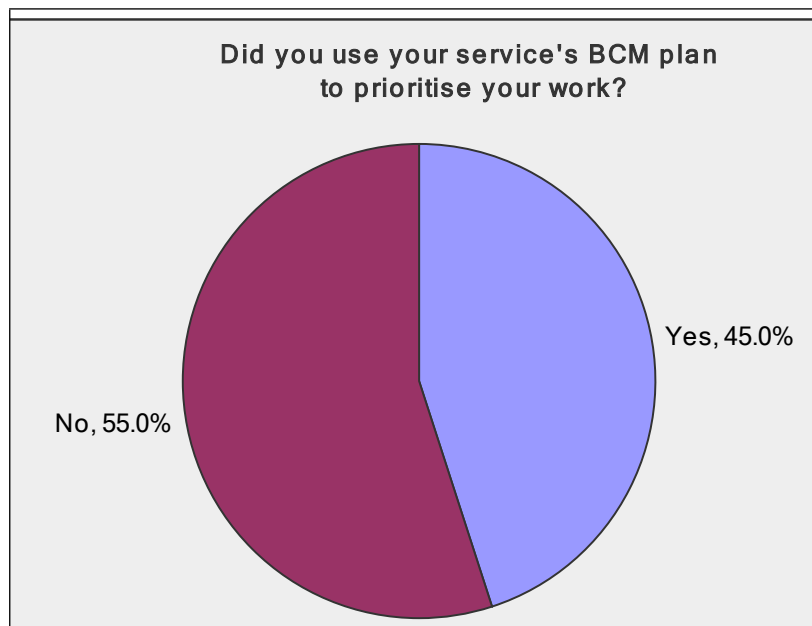
In any major incident staff are diverted from normal duties to support the response. The Council is required to have a corporate Business Continuity Plan under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and internally all services are detailed to have a Service Emergency Plan to cover both Business Continuity and Emergency Planning responses.

15. In order to assess the value of these service plans staff were asked **did their service activate their Business Continuity Management (BCM) Plan?**



Of the 137 responders the majority said no or don't know (84.7%).

16. On asking those who said their plan had been activated (21) **if the service's BCM Plan was used to prioritise their work.**



From the 20 responders to this question 11 (55%) said no.

STAFF Key Points 11:

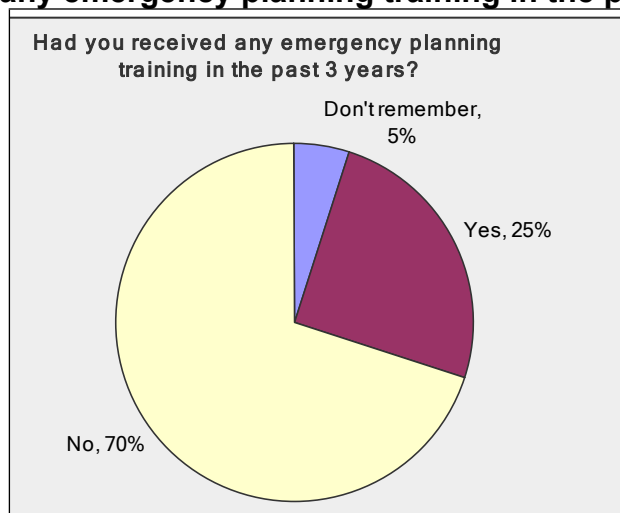
- The use of Corporate and Service level Business Continuity / Emergency Plans was minimal

How did staff rate training received in the past and what training needs for the future?

During the response there was a concern at the early stages that there would be insufficient volunteers coming forward since some were keen to be involved but had no previous training.

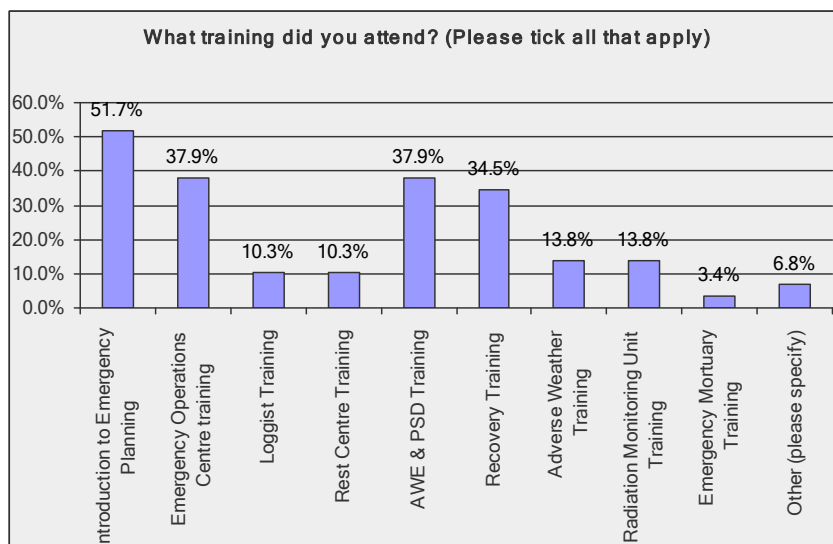
In order to assess the training needs, questions were asked in relation to previous training and the future.

17. Had you received any emergency planning training in the past 3 years?



156 responded with 75% not having had training or not remembering. This suggests a low pool of resources available to the Council in emergencies of trained staff.

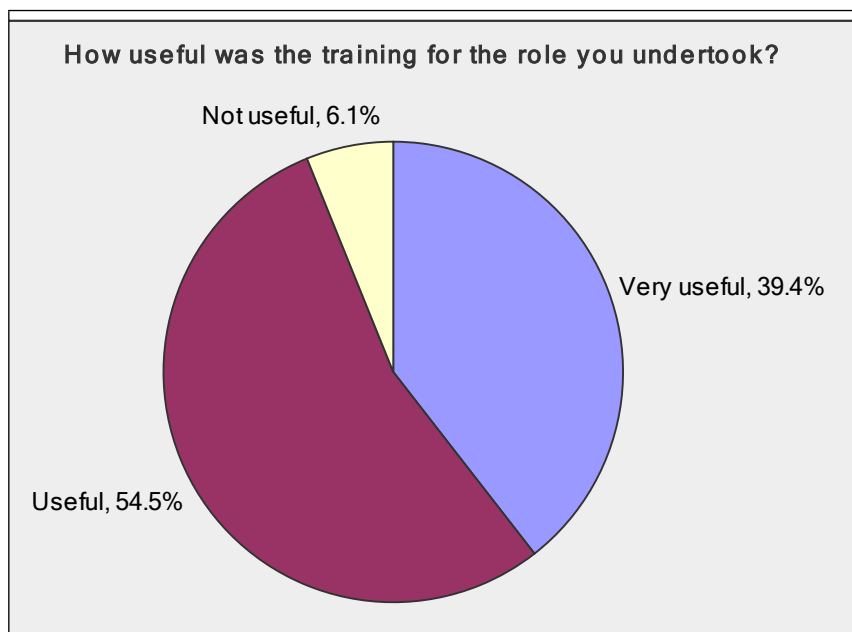
18. Those that had training (39) were asked what training they had attended?



Other training included driver training and strategic emergency planning.

Therefore from those that were trained in the basic 'Introduction to Emergency Planning' many also appear to have undertaken other more specific plan training e.g. adverse weather plan, AWE Off-Site Emergency Plan etc..

19. On asking how useful the training was for the role they undertook?



The majority found the training to be useful or very useful (93.9%) with 6.1% advising it had not been useful.

20. In order to find out if staff wished any future training they would need which would help them if they were to be involved in a future incident?



Other suggestions in relation to training related to:

- Swift Water Training
- Service Specific Training
- EOC role specific training
- Refresher training in small bites but more regular.

127 staff responded to this question suggesting an appetite to do more training and get more involved; with only 6 stating they did not want any training. Of the 9 courses highlighted 303 staff would like to attend them.

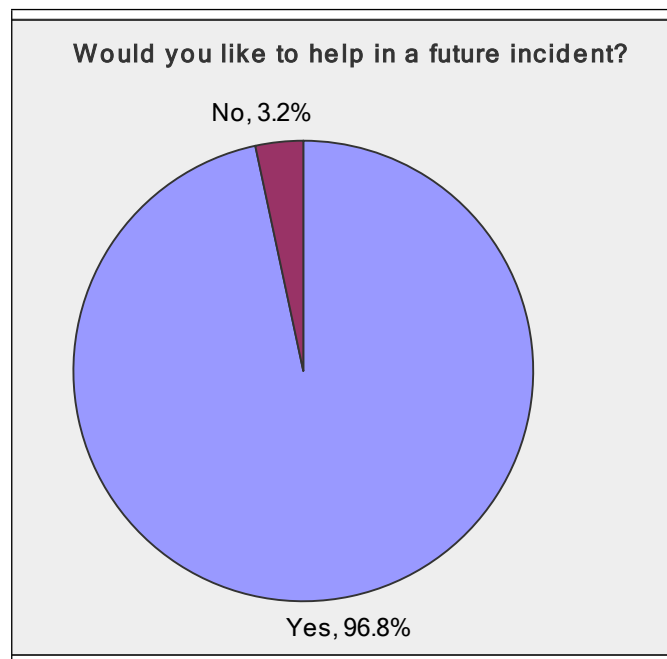
There is a spread of training requests however the highest requests were in relation to the EOC, the Introduction to Emergency Planning and Adverse Weather followed by specific role requests.

STAFF Key Points 12:

- There is an emerging gap in relation to the % of staff that are trained in the basics of Emergency Planning.
- Of those that had undertaken training it appeared that if they attended the introduction to Emergency Planning they went on to undertake future training and therefore were more valuable in a response.
- The majority 94% found that the training had been positive in relation to the role they had undertaken during the response.
- Of the 127 who responded, the majority wished to undertake further training in a wide range of emergency planning courses.

Would the responding staff get involved again and if so were there any other improvements to be made?

21. Staff were asked whether they would like to help in a future incident?



Of the 62 responders, 96.6%, 60 responders said yes which is positive for the future.

22. When asked if **there were any other improvements** that could be put in place for the future 24 staff responded. On reviewing the data a number of themes came through as set out below:

Theme	Comments
Communications	This related to internal and external communications in general and specially in relation to road closures
More staff in the areas affected	This related to more visibility of the Council in affected areas including in support of vulnerable clients.
EOC	These were in relation to shifts
Training	So as to respond better
Staffing concerns	In relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pressure felt by some staff to volunteer despite personal reasons they could not - felt guilty. ○ Numbers for the future in ever decreasing Council
Specific Flood areas	2 responses were in relation to specific flooded areas.
Policies	Policies should be adhered to and if not then a communication sent out to all to state the change and why.
Positive	6 of the responses were in relation to how the member of staff enjoyed working in the EOC and the hard work of all the responders.

STAFF Key Points 13:

- There are concerns in relation to:
 - Communications
 - Reduction in staffing levels
 - Policies being overturned
 - EOC changes
- Responding staff are engaged and wish to be involved in the future with some very positive feedback from staff involved.

Recommendations:

- i. Consideration should be given to what roles staff could undertake in their own communities – as part of the community response?
- ii. The number of Admin / Loggist staff in particular is a point to note in that, in order to keep on top of the calls coming in and managing the process it was very staff intensive.
- iii. This admin process therefore should be reviewed for future events such that the process is clearer and at an early stage the correct resources are considered in order to ensure support the specialist roles and manage the response needed in the community effectively.
- iv. The EOC management, resources and plans should be reviewed taking into account the feedback from this staff survey.
- v. The EOC welfare processes should be reviewed taking into account the feedback from this staff survey.
- vi. All managers should be made aware via training of the impact and therefore support needed for their staff and service if the EOC is activated.
- vii. Radio training on Airwave and other communication equipment should be undertaken – including the checks on security vetting.
- viii. The plans relating to emergencies should be made more accessible in the EOC, some plans need to be shortened into Tactical Plans/Action Cards.
- ix. A Tactical Advisor in the EOC is recommended throughout to ensure consistency and support is provided in relation to plans, processes etc.
- x. The integration of the differing Health agencies/authorities and the utility companies into the response and recovery structure is necessary
- xi. Specialists on site need support from LALOs so as they can get on with the tasks and LALO's can support the wider community & engage with other responders.
- xii. Management of the officers on site needs to be reviewed in a number of areas including: Correct transport available for the conditions; Coordination from the EOC and/or Services if necessary – to ensure support for all officers; Briefings and contacts before, during and after deployment including a clear communication route; Shifts of site staff so people not on site for long periods
- xiii. Business continuity requires to be more embedded into all directorates and services.
- xiv. When ever a Major Incident is declared immediate consideration should be given to the Business Continuity impact on the Council and plans put in place
- xv. Provision of additional training of WBC to be reviewed including:
 - Provision of some courses being shorter, targeted briefings and being provided on regular basis.
 - Provision of elearning for emergency planning
 - Consideration that some core courses are made mandatory

Appendix D Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Liaison Officers Debrief

In addition to an online survey, group debriefs were held to encourage debate and constructive suggestions on how to improve our response to future events.

As a result, on 13th June 2014, a debrief, involving service representatives was undertaken.

The aim of the debrief was to capture information to support the report and any subsequent recommendations produced as an outcome of the whole debrief process, in order to enhance the Councils' operational response, actions and improve methods of working for the future.

In so doing the representatives were asked to:

1. To reflect on Your service's performance
2. To reflect on Operational Actions and identify learning outcomes (Positive and Learning)
3. To capture and explore your thoughts about how your service/council can improve performance and working practices in the future.

This involved representatives from the following services:

Legal	Customer Services
Culture & Environmental Protection	ICT
Care Commissioning, Housing and Safeguarding	PH &WB
H&T	Strategic Support
Adult Social Care	

Following a short reminder of the incident the officers were asked to focus in specific headings:

Resources	Working with other agencies
Training	Command & Control
Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)	Vulnerable People
Communications	Information Sharing
Plans	Close Down

Throughout the debrief officers were asked to consider what went well alongside what could be improved.

The feedback is provided below:

Feedback from EPLO & BCLO		
	What worked well	Lessons Learnt / What could be improved
Command and Control	No Comments	No Adverse Comments
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More staff have requested training – raised awareness of emergency planning work. • We are well practiced with Flood issues and well trained. We react quickly and act efficiently and professionally • Staff / Service are better aware of the Major Incident process and what the Councils responsibilities are in such incidents. Raised awareness of emergency response activities of the Council. • Training – on specific issues including communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage Safer Communities Partnership (SCP) team members to go on EOC training to be better prepared for an emergency • Initial email requested trained EOC operators. This deterred others from offering assistance as time went on the EOC welcomed others • Training needed for Public Health (PH) team since joining the LA • Controllers need to have a clear set of expectations in advance and relevant training. The role requires certain attributes which should be used to consider how and who requires training in order to strengthen the role • Training for staff, before the next flood, about the way the EOC needs to work – clear process, strategy and technology
EOC		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a pool of people who are very clear about their roles • It would be best if peoples day to day jobs were matched with the role they undertake in the EOC • PH – Better team communication (started to improve) • Rotas were slow to be confirmed. • Common Knowledge of systems (GIS, ELM) process for logging calls from Customer Services was confusing and

		<p>duplicated work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities within the EOC need clarity • Proportion of people from same service away from their day to day role within the EOC • Information feeding into / out of the EOC in order to manage Business as usual (BAU) e.g. road closures for example would help waste team to plan BAU tasks • Rota / shift times precluded those who use trains – no trains at midnight. • Handover - needed to be lead by the Controller and consistent to the EOC group for a united response • Understanding if / when action had to be taken against calls / issues – Information Management (IM) systems • Feedback from the EOC varied depending on who was on duty • A more functional EOC in that at times when other agencies were involved in early stages the room got over crowded. • Did we need subject matter experts in the EOC? E.g. • Elected Members in the EOC – not necessary and a distraction. Can they be used in the response? Within communities – need a clear role for them. • PR – need to spend more physical time in the EOC to understand what is going on • Terms of reference to be communicated – EH / Public Health / EOC etc • EOC – use of fleet (waste 4x4) – log who takes the keys, if not needed give them the option to use them, manage the resource so not sat in car park. • Child care arrangements – time of shifts made arrangements difficult
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food – variety for vegetarian etc – more thought about type of food and who it is purchased/where from.
Info Sharing	No Comments	No Comments
Close Down	No Comments	No Comments
Vulnerable Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PH – Contractors / Commissioned services were flexible and supported service users. Irrespective of challenges which supported the Council response Flexible reports to rapidly indentify vulnerable clients (Raise reports) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More contact with those in the community necessary – perhaps in the form of a Major Incident Support Team which could be multi-agency. (MIST)
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BAU was managed – services continued to deliver key services Number of staff from CEP who volunteered early on & kept going Payment provided an incentive Clear definition between teams in highways – helped answer questions by knowing where to head questions to Emergency payments made promptly Some members of the PH team able to participate within the EOC ICT up and running 24/7 for staff access to corporate IT services Excellent response by Volker's highway and their sub contractors Use of Blackberry's support from contractors kept frontline services going; plus extra out-of-the-usual tasks Community spirit in East Ilsley – came together and considered wider impact Staff keen to help meant there were lots of volunteers Staff continued BAU tasks Availability of staff from SCP team to cover EOC when requested, when all staff were 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff doing long hours – staff welfare issues Have someone to cover my workload. Worked piled up for some people which had to be faced after helping with the response. Need the infrastructure to support the needs of the flooded areas and need to have the persons in place to mobilise it. Ready to react before being asked to react. If it was not for Jackie Woodland then I don't think IT would have been involved at all – we need more promotion of EP in ICT'. Not clear when Business Continuity kicked in – no decision made so expectations were not managed. The same faces involved which showed experience but impacted workload. New faces 'thrown into the fire' no consistency. Frustrated with not having a common IT system that connected the EOC / Highways and Customer Services. We could all contribute from our service in some way to help the general effort

	<p>able to get into work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covering / Managing work from a BAU perspective – sharing workload to those outside the EOC – Alleviated pressure and managed to maintain services • Identified officers who had a passion for EH issues that overlapped – e.g. motivated staff • Linked up workforce and interesting 'jobs' shared between teams. Demonstrated resilience argument for shared service in Environmental Health • Use of Adventure Dolphin canoes • Work covered by team to support in response • Raised awareness so more people may want training in order to help next time round 	
Plans / Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CS well prepared thanks to the Customer Services Emergency Plan each provider service stepped up to assist with ensuring business as usual. Worked together and communicated well across the teams. Willing to work extra hours flexibly • Arranged diversions for public bus services and school transport services quickly and efficiently; providing reimbursement for operators having to make longer diversions etc. Arranged new transport for individuals who had to move out of their homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sticking to policies – sandbag policy was over turned • Didn't use the roles and responsibilities within the MIP plan • Communication around the sandbag policy was unclear when it changed. • Plans are long therefore shorter Action Cards would be helpful.
Working with Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception that Army was involved therefore it was a serious event (staff and communities) • Availability of neighbourhood wardens and rangers to assist with community liaison • Good feedback from operators letting us know of issues (flooding and road blocks) on the ground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care staff not prepared to wear appropriate PPE (or wellies) put added pressure on other services • Thames Water approach –they did not engage with their customers well. • SCP need to review team input, in relation as to what we can do from a crime reduction perspective and community awareness.

Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good community engagement in partnership with Thames Water – flood buses. • We were able to divide up roles. We were able to talk to people directly affected, on occasion. • Able to communicate from various locations via mobile phone and laptop • Staff kept updated on the situation • Communication across teams from EOC was strong and informative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need a method of getting more accurate information on road closures (to the nearest postcode) • More communications on website and social media – often out of date and only reacting.
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Summary & Recommendations:

There were a significant number of positive comments made in relation to the response. Areas to consider for improvement are set out below:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Provide a training programme for emergency planning, some bespoke to services.
2. Review the EOC operation including:
 - a. Roles & Responsibilities
 - b. Tactical Advisors
 - c. Shifts – pattern and lengths
 - d. Welfare
 - e. Information Management System
 - f. Competence of officers in roles
 - g. Logs for staff, resources incl pumps, vehicles etc
 - h. Comms rep to be in EOC
3. Consider a Major Incident Support Team to coordinate the response and support to vulnerable clients.
4. Review resources especially in relation to increasing the number of trained staff willing so people don't get fatigued.
5. Plans and policies:
 - a. Consider taking extracts from plans and providing action cards or tactical plans which help the EOC get started.
 - b. Sandbag Policy – review it and stick to the policy. If not, it needs to be communicated as to what the policy is and why.
6. External contractors to be contacted in relation to their BCM and ensuring their staff have all the necessary resources – equipment etc to undertake their role effectively regardless of weather conditions
7. Utilities esp TW to review their customer services approach. Customers should be dealt with at the first point of contact and therefore would be less likely to contact other agencies.
8. Improve the communications on internet and intranet in particular to assist the community and to ensure staff are able to continue as normally as possible. This should include a process of providing quick and easily accessible information on road closures, roads at risk, public rights of way etc .

Appendix E Residents Survey Report

The primary aim of the consultation was to seek the views of West Berkshire residents affected by the flooding to help identify potential areas for improvement in the way the Council responds to emergencies, to gauge how residents viewed the response of the Council and other agencies and to assess what residents did for themselves or their community this time and would consider doing in the future. Responses were collected via an online survey and on hard copies. Due to the low number of respondents, the findings of this survey cannot be extrapolated or be considered as representative of the population.

A total of 229 residents completed the survey from a total of 65,000 homes affected by the flooding. Of those that responded, the majority were in areas particularly affected by the floods. N.B.: Data in columns c, d & e below provided by the Civil Contingencies Team

Community (a)	No of responders (b)	Community Emergency Plan (C)	Flood Wardens (d)	No of Properties flooded 2013/14 (e)
Aldermaston	0	YES		1
Bagnor	2			
Bucklebury	6	YES	YES	
Burghfield incl Pingewood	3			18
Calcot	1			
Compton	10		YES	2
East Garston	6		YES	6
East Ilsley	3		YES - DURING FLOODS	13
Eastbury	25		YES	7
Great Shefford	19	YES	YES	16
Hampstead Marshall	0			1
Hampstead Norreys	3		YES - DURING FLOODS	6
Lambourn	6		YES	12
Lower Denford	1			
Newbury - Northcroft	1		YES	4
Newbury - Shaw	21			36
Newbury - Wash Common	1			
Newbury - Westfield	1			1
Padworth	1			4
Pangbourne	5	YES	YES	4
Purley	14	YES	YES	29
Streatley	9			12
Sulham	2		YES	
Sulhamstead	2	DRAFT		
Thatcham	1		YES	
Theale/Sheffield Bottom	2	YES		5
Upper Lambourn	5		YES - DURING FLOODS	3
Weston	1			
Winterbourne	1		YES	1
Woolhampton	0			3
West Ilsley	41		YES - DURING FLOODS	9

Of the 229 people that answered the question a total of 182 were in properties that flooded internally.

The majority of responders (87.9%) were owner occupiers with 10.1% being in private rented properties and 2% being in shared ownership or social housing. This compares to the census figures of 70% owner occupiers, 13.5% private rented and 14% shared owner or social housing. The impact on the Council with respect to the response and recovery of those responding imply that they are more able to look after themselves where as the impact on the Council would be higher if more social housing properties were affected.

2. FINDINGS

The key findings from the survey are set out below.

To what extent were the residents affected by the flooding and know why they flooded?

1. Respondents were asked to confirm ***what caused the flooding in their area*** from a choice of options. They could choose more than one option.

Answer Options	%	No of responders
Don't know	2.6%	6
Groundwater (when the water table rises)	84.6%	193
River water (when the river bursts its banks)	50.4%	115
Surface water (when rainwater is unable to drain away)	55.3%	126
Sewage	32.0%	73
Other (please specify)	1.3%	3

The responses indicate that the flooding for some was a combination of more than one type of flooding.

The greatest number of responders reported that the cause of the flooding in their area was due to groundwater (84.6%) this is also reflected in the respondents location, in that 175 of the 229 responders (76%) are from areas known to be at risk of groundwater flooding.

The next highest response was in relation to surface water – rainwater unable to drain away (55.3%) which suggests that the drains/gulleys or other water systems such as rivers were unable to cope with the amount of water or were obstructed in some way thus restricting the flow.

River flooding was the third highest reported cause of flooding (50.4%). Since 3 of the rivers in the area are groundwater fed this no doubt contributed to the amount of river related flooding.

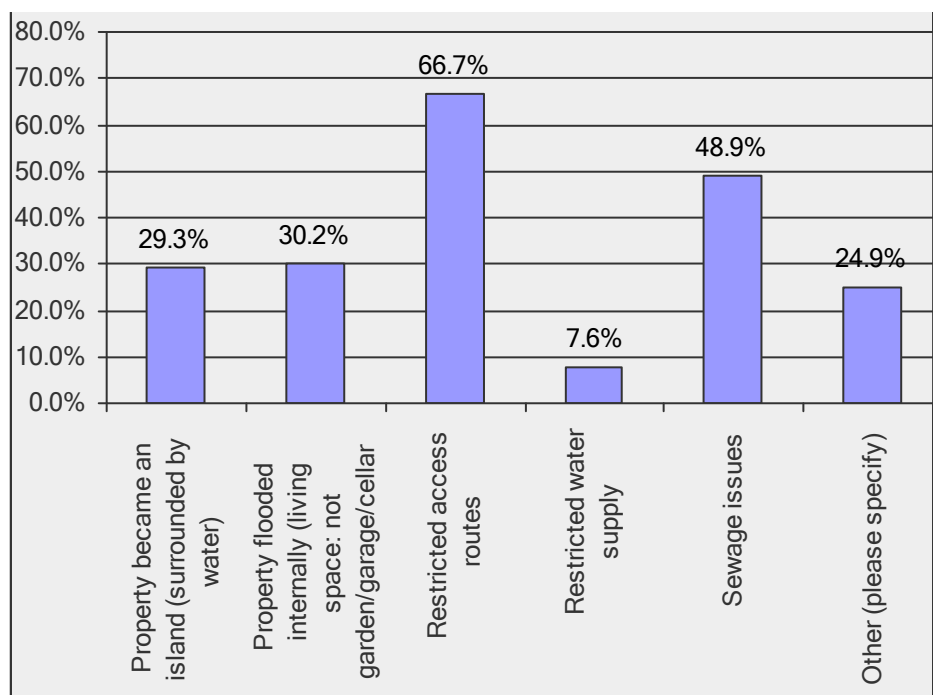
Sewage flooding was reported as the next most common cause of flooding (32%). This too is likely to be linked to the groundwater flooding situation since groundwater can infiltrate the sewer system which results in sewer flooding.

The results also show that the area was affected by different flooding types. This has knock on effects to the Council and the residents in that different responses and preparations necessary. Thus showing the complexity of flooding in West Berkshire and the apparent understanding of those affected.

RESIDENTS Key Points 1:

- Whilst groundwater was the highest reported cause of flooding in the area, the knock on effect of groundwater flooding is other flooding, river and sewage in particular.
- Different types of flooding require different responses from agencies and different preparation for residents, particularly for property level protection.

2. On asked what the **effects of the flooding** was on the responders again a number of choices were provided with respondents able to choose more than one option.



67% of the 225 respondents to this question were affected by restricted access routes. In addition 29% of responders advised their properties became islands surrounded by water. This result indicated that even if a respondent was not flooded internally the flooding around the properties or on roads did restrict access and therefore affect normal life. Consideration should be given to how access for communities could be improved during flooding.

Next was the impact of sewage (49%). This is not the responsibility of the Council. Thames Water plc are the sewage undertakers and therefore should review their systems to alleviate the problems. It becomes a Council issue if there is a public health related outbreak or indeed properties cannot use their facilities and therefore become unfit for habitation under Housing legislation.

30% of responders flooded internally in their home. The cause of this flooding may have been answered in Q1 above; however the Flood & Water Management Act 2010, S19 reports being undertaken by Highways & Transport Service will provide more details on the causes and therefore the recommendations for flood alleviation.

24.9% provided details of other effects of the flooding:

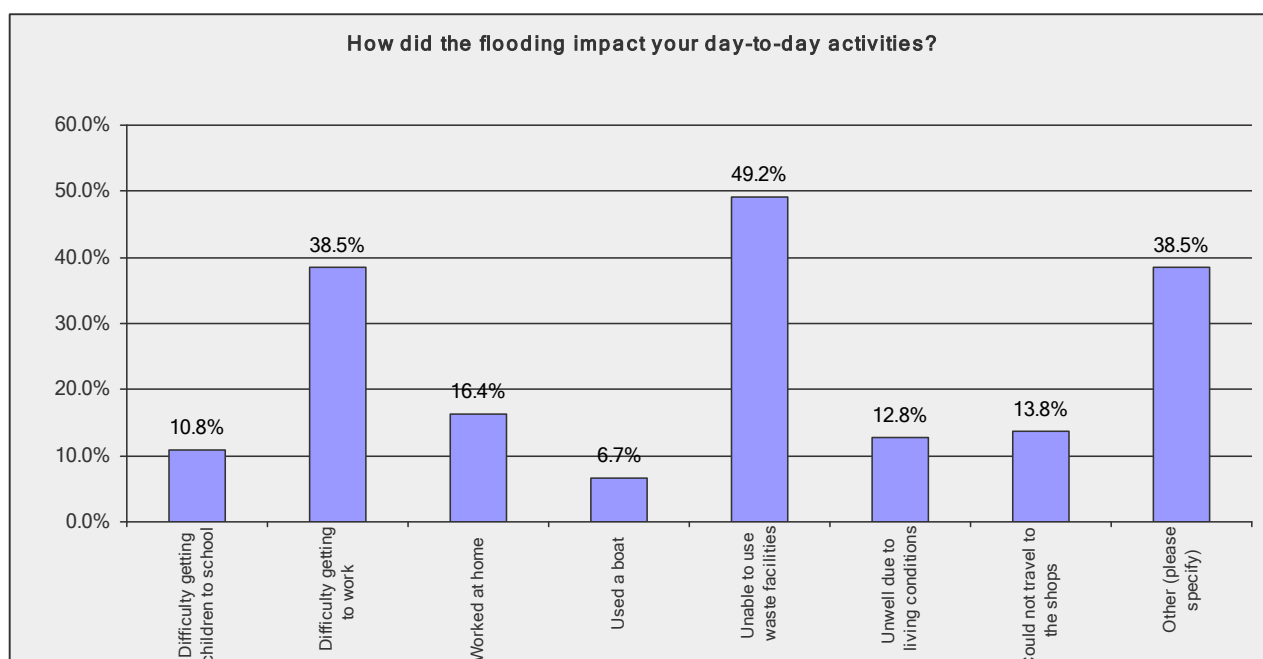
- Garden flooded (9)
- Flooding under the floors of properties but not in the 'living space' (7)
- Concerns about infection from contaminated water (2)
- Septic Tank issues in relation to private sewage disposal (1)

- Concerns about drinking water quality (1)

RESIDENTS Key Points 2:

- The effects of flooding can be complex depending on the type of flooding involved

3. Apart from the affects of physical flooding and limited use of facilities the respondents detailed ***the impact of the flooding on their day to day life*** covering a range of issues:



Of the 195 responders to this question the major impacts were noted to be:

- Unable to use waste facilities (49%)
- Difficulty getting to work (38.5%)
- Other (38.5%)

The first two link to Q2 above in relation to:

- Sewage flooding and the other impact of the sewage system being impacted by groundwater in that the waste systems in homes cannot be used or have reduced capacity with the risk of internal flooding;
- Difficulty getting to work could relate to the road issues.

However these options covered only some of the impacts of the adverse weather. Below are some of the themes and comments detailed as other impacts to the residents:

- Fearful about leaving the house since they were frightened that if they left it would flood.
- Exhausted by constant fear and making sure pumps and defences still working.
- Unable to leave the house since making sure pumps still working and power failures. Some had to refuel pumps every 2 hours.
- Unable to go to work due to the stress and need to protect the home

- Stress of living in part of the house – living upstairs since the ground floor flooded.
- Access issues, not only on main roads, meaning long detours but cars being parked elsewhere since garage or road was flooded; walking planks to get out of the home, climbing over sandbags. Not able to get to the house or having to access via neighbours or even knocking down walls to get access. Often long detours to get anywhere.
- Loss of fixtures, fittings and belongings
- Using portaloos for a long period of time and having to reduce the use of toilets, baths, washing etc to prevent the system from backing up more,
- Vulnerable people affected by being flooded directly or having to manage visits for dialysis or people with learning disabilities where change made their condition worse.
- 'living' in wellingtons or waders to go anywhere
- Suffering from gastroenteritis type infections or fearing being ill
- Worrying about pets or animals since they could not go outside and for farmers/stables there were issues of increased feeding costs

Throughout all the written feedback was the sentiment of fear, exhaustion and desperation of the responders to the situation they faced during the flooding exasperated since the situation went on for weeks.

RESIDENTS Key Points 3:

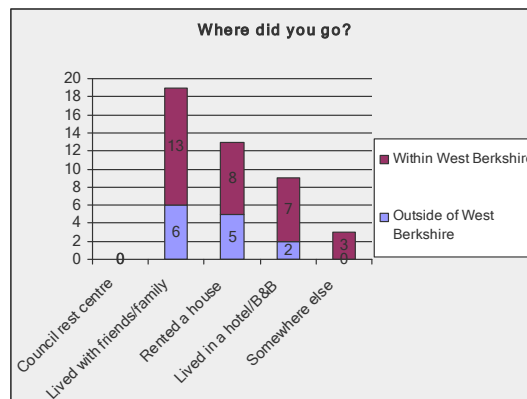
- The impact of flooding is far more than the physical aspect of flooded properties but the significant impact on people's wellbeing.
- In relation to how to reduce this impact on people there are two key elements:
 - Communications –providing information to allow residents to understand what has happened, why it's happened and what the impacts may be. Therefore residents can make informed decisions, put aside the concerns that cannot be under their control but put in place actions which can reduce the other fears which may be installation of different pumps which are less onerous on managing, full property level protection.
 - Support - this is not necessarily support by way of physical flood defences but someone with knowledge to talk to. Whilst this does link to communications it is more than that and has been recognised in other events such as Dunblane Shootings and Glasgow Helicopter Crash. This support would be to allow a 2 way conversation to allow reassurance and if necessary additional support to be put in place. It would not necessarily be a one to one support but support to a community and would need to be put in place at the early stages of an incident. It is therefore suggested that the Council, working with other agencies should consider a Major Incident Support Team (MIST).

4. Responders where asked **where they went** during the flooding.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	83.9%	187
No	16.1%	36

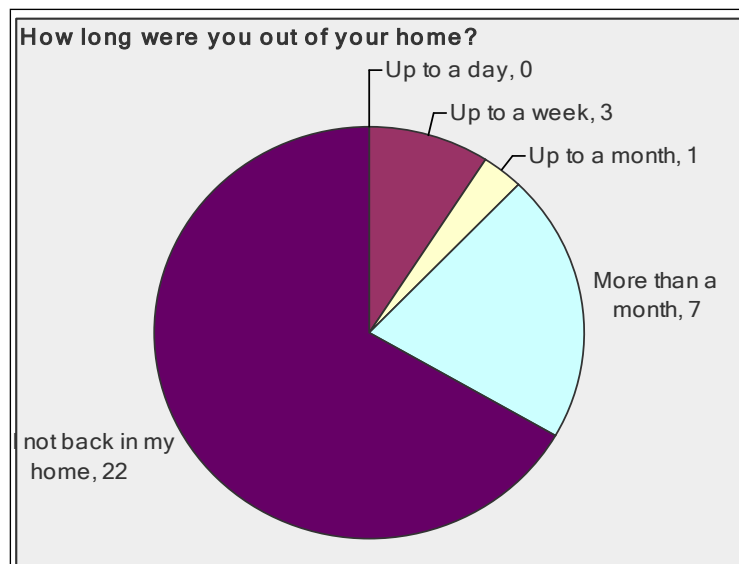
The majority 84% (187) of 223 responders remained in their property during the flooding despite the issues that this created to their day to day life.

5. For those that had to move out they were asked **where they went to?**



Of the 33 people who responded the majority found alternative accommodation within West Berkshire (70%) however a significant number (30%) had to move out of West Berkshire.

6. Responders who had moved out were also asked **how long they were out of their homes.**



Of the 33 who answered the question, 22 were still not in their home at the time of the survey closing (6 June 14).

The impact of having to move out of home for any length of time is known to add to the stress of the event. However, people are often out of their homes for more than six months. Additional tension is created if the alternative accommodation is not in the local area. Residents worry about it being burgled; changed routine for work/school and this level of stress can have an adverse effect on those involved.

In this case no homeless requests were made to the Council to support any flood victim, suggesting that all were managing through their own family, funds, insurance or landlords to find suitable alternative accommodation.

This situation may have been very different if more rented properties were affected or if in the future residents may not undertake effective repairs due to insurance charges. This may result in unfit homes under the housing legislation if full and proper repairs are not undertaken and therefore put more pressure on housing stock.

Under slightly different circumstances the impact on the Council could have been significantly more. The Government has been working with the Association of British Insurers however this has been slow with residents worrying and struggling in the interim. It is considered therefore that a stronger lead should be taken by insurance companies if residents put in property level protection in order to reduce the impact of flooding. In addition, consideration should be given to how larger numbers in a community could be re-housed for a period of 6 – 12 months

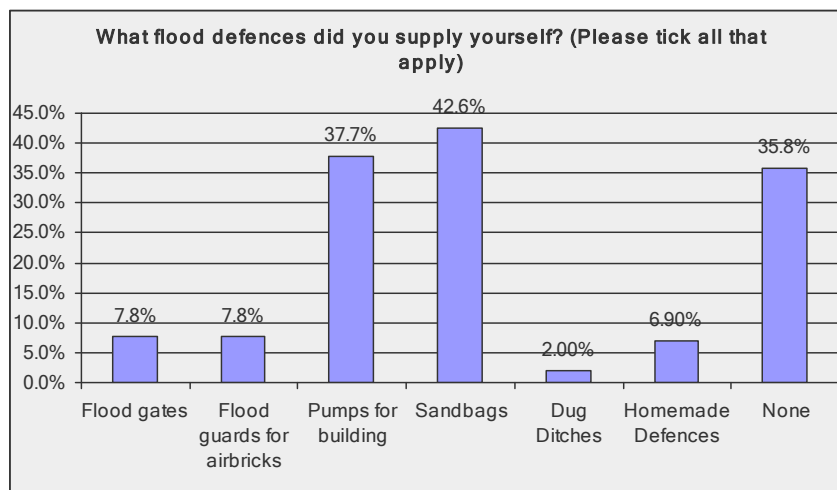
RESIDENTS Key Points 4:

- Properties flooding can result in the residents having to move out for a long time adding to the stress of the situation.

What did the responding residents do for themselves?

It is important to understand what the responding residents did for themselves and their communities in order to confirm good practice and encourage others to do similar actions. This is relevant because there is no legal duty for the Council to protect individual properties from flooding instead under Civil Law it is the responsibility of the property owner¹¹. To this end a number of questions were set to establish how prepared individuals and communities were to respond to flooding and what they did.

7. Responders were asked what flood defences residents supplied themselves.

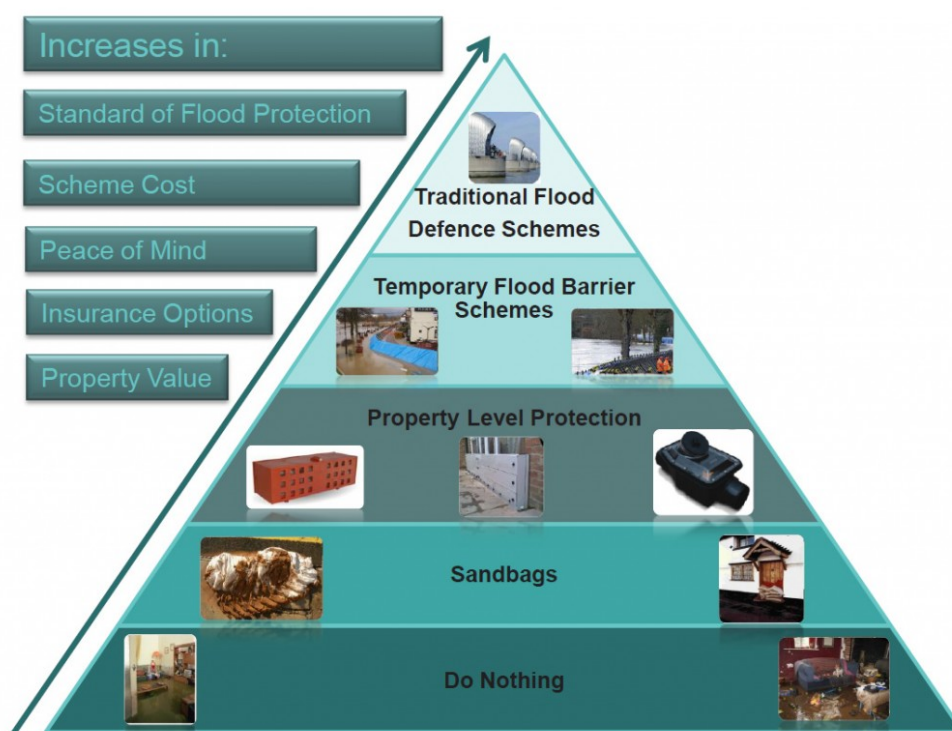


From the responses as set out in the graph below there are 3 distinct areas.

¹¹ <http://www.environmentlaw.org.uk/rte.asp?id=105>

- a. 53.3% of responders who had a degree of preparation by way of property level protection which would require planning and purchase in advance (53.3%) (Flood Gates, Flood Guards & Pumps). It should be noted however that some of these pumps were sourced during the event.
- b. 51.5% of responders took immediate action during the event. This included sandbags, digging ditches/by passes and homemade defences. In this group by far the greatest reliance was on sandbags.
- c. 35.8% of responders provided no flood defences. Some of this can be explained in that it was noted that some residents did not flood; some 'accepted' that with the amount of water and where they lived there was nothing that could be done. 2 responders also identified that they were infirm or unwell and therefore not able to help themselves.

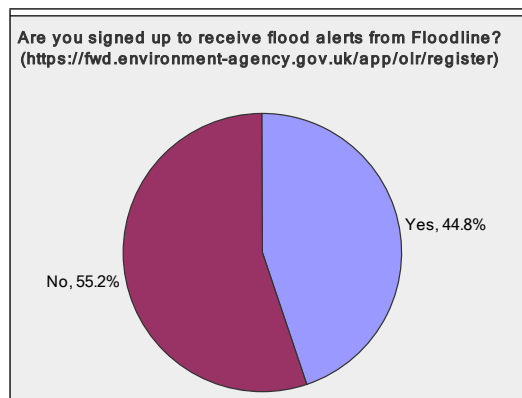
The group of responders relying on 'last minute' own defences focusing on sandbags is a concern. Sandbags are often seen as the answer to flooding – they are not. They have their place but unless carefully planned and laid correctly they may stall the risk of flooding for sometime but will not necessarily stop it. This is also reflected in the National Flood Forum website¹² which shows the link between increasing standard of flood protection with sandbags being shown as being better than doing nothing but low down on the standard of protection they afford.



Source – National Flood Forum.

8. Responders were asked if they were signed up to receive alerts from the Environment Agency run Floodline Service.

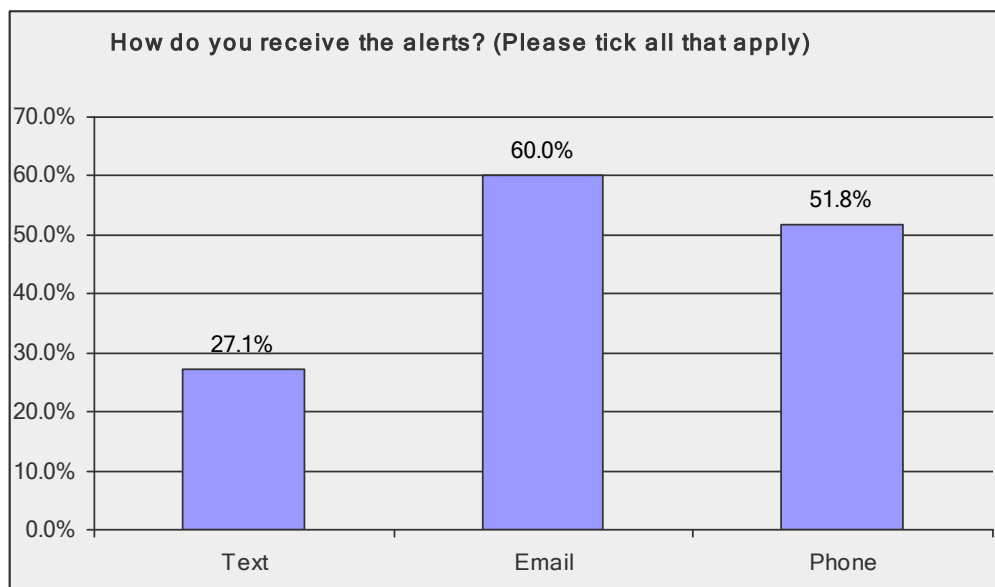
¹² <http://www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk/>



Significantly 55% of 201 responders to this question were not signed up to the free service. They may of course have got information from other sources but the Floodline Service is nationally recognised.

On reviewing the postcodes in more detail against the Environment Agency website flood risk areas ¹³ to consider if the responders were or were not in flood risk areas it was found that the majority of responders (95%) were in or very close to flood risk areas.

9. On asking those who received alerts in what format they received the alert.



85 responders confirmed that the majority of alerts were received by email (60%). This was closely followed by phone alerts (51.8%) with text alerts being the least common (27.1%).

It was noted, however on reviewing the alerts and warnings put in place over the winter, that approx 50% of alerts were put in place outside 'office' hours with one at 00:40am therefore depending on the means of alert; the email address used and the platform for receiving emails some people may not receive a quick alert to the forthcoming risk. Therefore there are limitations with the scheme.

RESIDENTS Key Points 5:

- There are a significant number of residents in known flood risk areas who are not signed up to basic flood alerts.
- There appears to be an over reliance on last minute flood defences by residents and an over reliance on sandbags as the main property flood defence regardless of their actual effectiveness.
- There have been Government schemes to support property level protection in the past however these have been based on community schemes and whilst

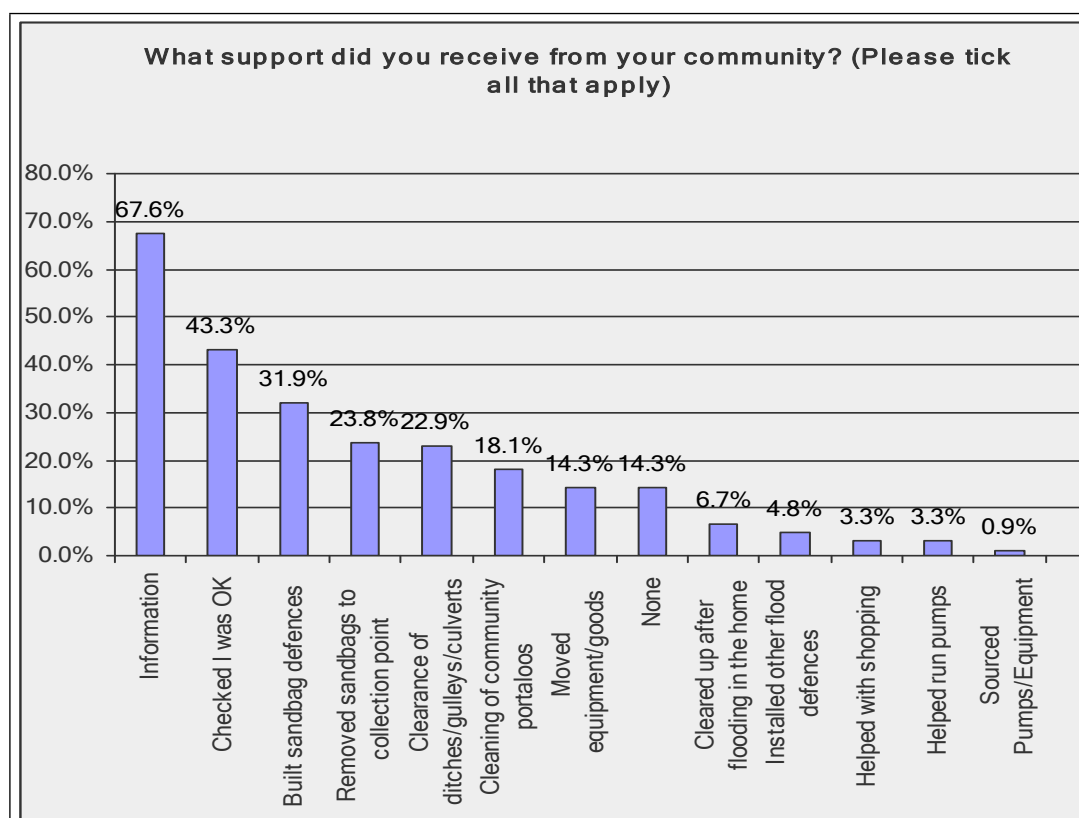
What support did the responding residents get or give in their Community.

In recent years there has been a drive by West Berkshire Council for communities to develop Community Emergency Plans. This was identified as good practice following the severe winters of 2009/10 and 2011/12 which showed that despite the best efforts of the Council the size of the area and the scale of the situation meant that the Council could not be everywhere at once. This has also been picked up by many communities in their Community Plans¹⁴.

In an attempt to understand what help was given and provided in communities and therefore what additional support may be required for community planning, a number of questions were asked of responders.

¹⁴ <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29165>

10. Responders were asked what support responders got from their communities?



There was a wide range of support provided by the communities, from the provision of information to sourcing equipment.

With respect to information, Flood Wardens and Lock Keepers were specifically praised along with several Ward and Parish Members.

Other types of activities included support during the response phase and the clear up of homes / community.

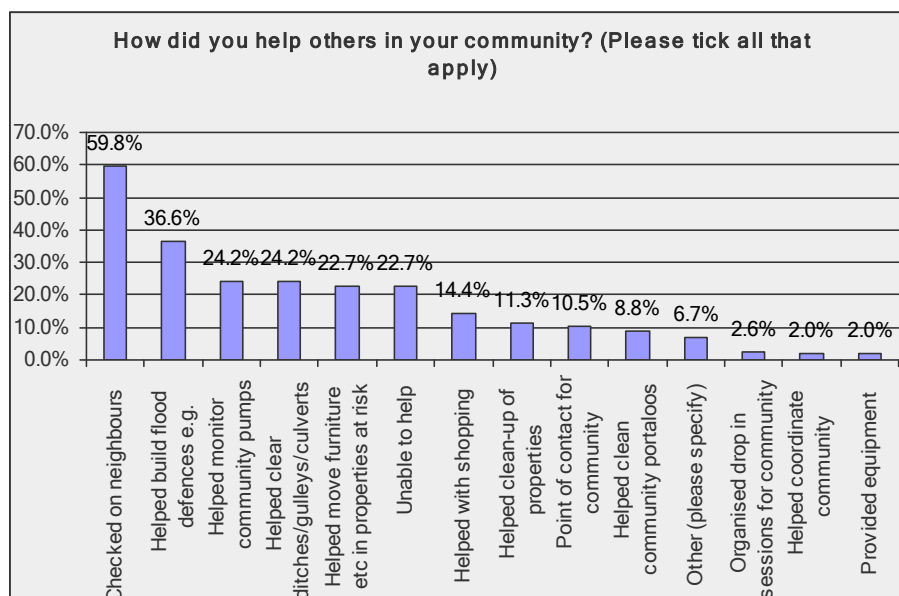
Some responses clearly showed how responders believed the community pulled together stating that they were 'incredible' or 'exceptional'. It was also noted that neighbours and families supported each other, but not necessarily the wider community.

However, whenever there is good community and individual efforts there tends to be some alternative feedback. This was borne out in comments about how residents saw their neighbours as selfish – doing work on their own properties to the adverse effect of others.

RESIDENTS Key Points 6:

- Community spirit and support was evident during this event with some communities working very hard for each other.
- The support provided was wide ranging.
- There was more community support and engagement during the response phase than in recovery phase (removal of sandbags to collection points and clearing up) the community support dropped away.
- Rural communities supported each other more than in more urban settings.
- An example of the above was noted by the WBC Recovery Team in particular in relation to sandbag recovery. It was found that rural communities helped themselves and the Council. They recovered sandbags from individuals to be used in the community later or for collection. In contrast an urban area in Newbury was the very opposite, despite leafleting door to door in the affected area. The outcome was that the WBC Recovery Team engaged with the Community Pay Back service and arranged for a Saturday morning where Volkers Highways Contractors, Council staff, Ward and Town Councillors moved sandbags to collection points – with no support from the community.

11. Responders were also asked **what support they provided to their communities.**



Similar to the support provided by the community there was a wide range of support provided by the 194 responders to this question.

The support most frequently provided was checking on neighbours (60%) and helping build flood defences. There was then a relatively even spread of support provided by way of managing community pumps, clearing gulleys and moving property at risk of flooding.

A not insignificant number (23%) were unable to help. The reasons given were that they were: 'too old'; unwell or too busy trying to save their own property.

RESIDENTS Key Points 7:

- The wide support provided by the responders was positive.
- This support cannot be relied upon since residents at risk themselves will by necessity look to save themselves and their homes first.
- In any community there will be a number of residents who cannot help themselves and may need more support – by the community or other agencies.
- Any community emergency planning needs to take into account that, whilst community resilience volunteers may be ‘allocated’ areas in their direct neighbourhood to support, there needs to be flexibility for others from different areas to help when whole neighbourhoods are affected.
- When a community is heavily involved in their own response, additional support to the vulnerable needs to be considered – potentially by the formation of a Major Incident Support Team. This team would support the vulnerable in communities and identify any further ‘welfare’ issues emerging where support can be put in place.

12. Communications in any incident is important. It has also been raised in previous incidents in relation to understanding what is happening. Therefore in order to find out more the responders were asked **how residents found out what was happening in their community?**

Answer Options	Face to face	Email	Website	Twitter	Facebook	Radio/TV	Publication
West Berkshire Council	45	58	26	1	1	8	9
West Berkshire District Councillor	35	13	2	2	0	0	1
Local Town/Parish Councillor	69	44	5	1	1	0	1
Flood warden	73	46	2	0	4	0	1
Community group	47	45	3	0	4	0	1
Environment Agency	34	33	37	0	0	6	3
Thames Water	23	19	12	0	0	0	4
Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE)	7	5	2	0	0	2	2
Local media	7	8	11	1	0	28	14
National media	4	3	3	1	0	29	7
	343 (40.3%)	274 (32.1%)	103 (12.1%)	6 (0.7%)	10 (1.1%)	73 (8.6%)	43 (5.1%)

186 responders answered this question.

From the responses the main sources of information were face to face (40.3%) and email (32.1%) regardless of the source.

Most of the information received was from Flood Wardens, 19.3%; followed by information from Local Town and Parish Councils and community groups.

Other information was received from West Berkshire Council (16.7%) and the Environment Agency (10.8%). This indicates that most people got their information locally from the local community and not necessarily from West Berkshire Council or other agencies which cover wider the area. This may be because the information provided by the other agencies was not relevant, up-to-date, suitable or in the correct format for the majority of responders.

Website usage for obtaining information was the third most used source (12.1%). The Environment Agency website was the most used with 35.9% of the response, West Berkshire Council followed with 25.2%.

Other sources of information reported by the responders included:

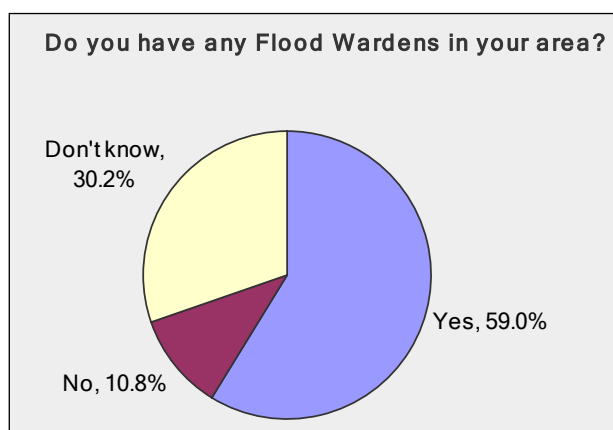
- Met office,
- Thames Valley Police,
- Lock Keepers
- Village Shop/Pub
- Village Magazine
- MP

Notably, social media was not used extensively by those that responded to this consultation as a method of garnering information. This is supported by a recent survey undertaken by the Cabinet Office which showed that:

“...the majority of responders to the survey used social media (amongst others) to provide information during an incident (92 of 151 responders). However in the same report it was noted that ‘in 2012 a survey conducted by Ipsos-MORI on behalf of the Cabinet Office found that 62% of the British public would want to be informed of an emergency via television. In contrast only 20% of respondents wanted to be informed via social media. A 2013 survey conducted by eMarketer found that just over 50% of the UK population (32.1million people) used social media at least once a month, although this was also forecast to rise to 53% by 2014.’¹⁵”.

¹⁵ ALERT ACTIVATION PROTOCOLS: CONSULTATION REPORT 2014 – Cabinet Office

13. Over recent years a network of Flood Wardens has been developed. Responders were asked if they if **there were flood wardens in their community?**



The response demonstrated that 59% knew they had flood wardens in their community.

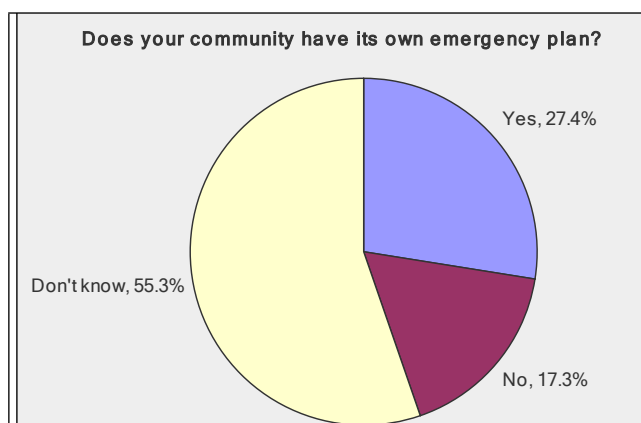
Using the postcode information provided at least 14% of responders are in areas with no flood wardens. This suggests that in some communities there are insufficient flood wardens for the area they support or they are not making themselves known to support the wider community.

Similar to the point above in relation to supporting communities, many of the flood wardens have volunteered since they have flooded in the past. However this may mean they are not fully able to fulfil their role as Warden during a flood as their own properties may be under threat.

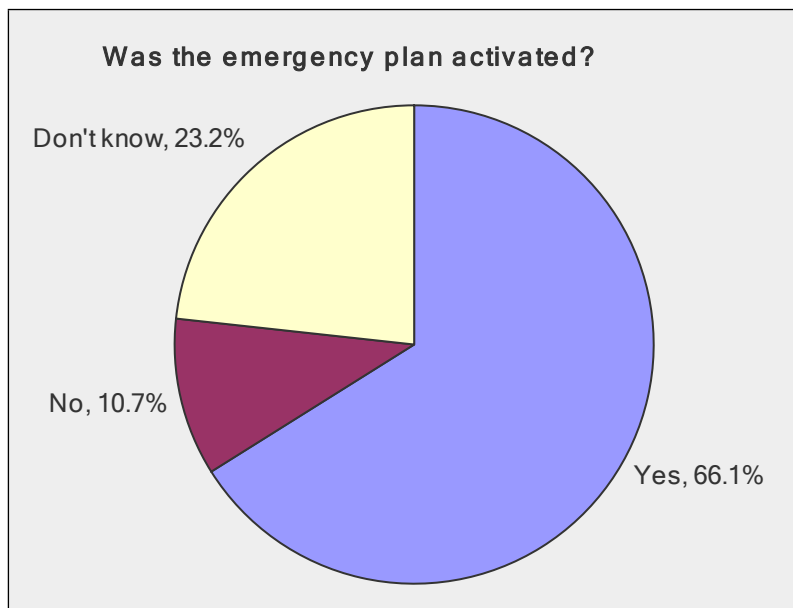
RESIDENTS Key Points 8:

- Communications in an emergency with accurate information is essential
- The community information updates was most commonly spread by the communities, face to face or via email.
- Council, EA and TW websites were used for updates to a lesser extent.
- Social media was not a commonly used means of obtaining information.
- Residents do wish to get information directly in their community

14. Since 2007 communities have been encourage to develop Community Emergency Plans, as a result responders were asked **if their community had an emergency plan and if so if it were activated**

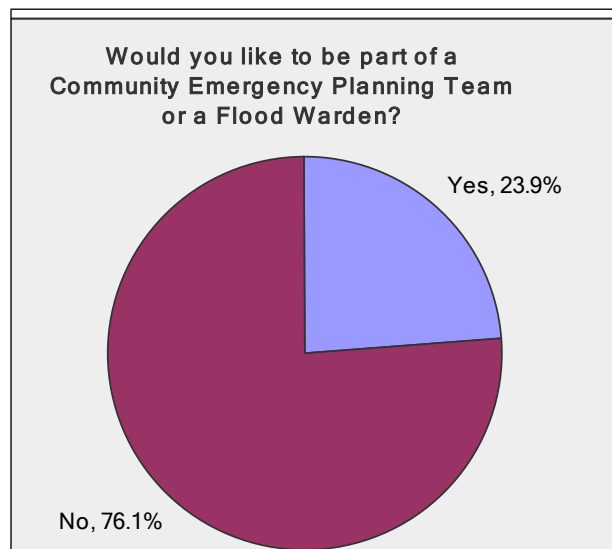


27.4% (57 of 208) responders knew their community had a Community Emergency Plan and of these 57, (66%) said their plan had been activated/used.



On reviewing the number of communities known to have plans against the postcodes of responders, there were 27 'communities' of which 7 are known to have Community Emergency Plans. It was also noted that of the 7 with Community Emergency Plans, the response from the communities were amongst the highest and 4 of these communities have a number of active flood wardens. (see page 1 of this survey analysis)

15. Responders were asked if they would like to be part of a Community Emergency Team or a Flood Warden.



50 out of 209 suggested that to increase the size of any network of support locally would be difficult and there was not necessarily the will to get involved in the community.

That said of the 50, who said they would be happy to get involved they all provided their details with only 4 of them being flood wardens for their communities already.

RESIDENTS Key Points/Comments 10:

- Where there are Community Emergency Plans and flood wardens/community emergency volunteers the knowledge and engagement is greater.
- Where communities have been affected in the past by an incident they are more likely to be engaged.
- To procure engagement in the local Community Emergency Plans and Community Resilience Volunteers will be challenging for urban areas.

What support did the responding residents get from West Berkshire and how did they evaluate this support.

Whilst it is not the Council's duty to protect individual's properties it is the duty of the Council as a Cat 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004 to:

a. preventing an emergency,
b. reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of an emergency, or
c. enabling other action to be taken in connection with an emergency, and
d. have arrangements to warn the public

Having regard to this, questions were asked to evaluate the support provided by the Council.

16. Responders were asked as to whether they **had contacted the Council?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	46.3%	94
No	53.7%	109

46.3% (94) of 203 responders confirmed they had contacted the council.

17. They were then asked as to **why had they contacted the Council?**

Issue	No of contacts
To ask for sandbags	55
To report flooding	53
To get updates on the flooding in my area	33
To report sewage problems	26
To ask for pumps	21
To report contamination issues	16
To report concerns about public health	16
To report trees and other storm damage	8
To ask for a portaloo	7
To report power outages	4
To report blockages in rivers	2
To report breakdowns in pumps	2
To find out about bin collections	1

Of the 94 that had contacted the Council 91 responded to this question. The majority of contacts were in relation to sandbag provision (59%) and to report flooding (58%).

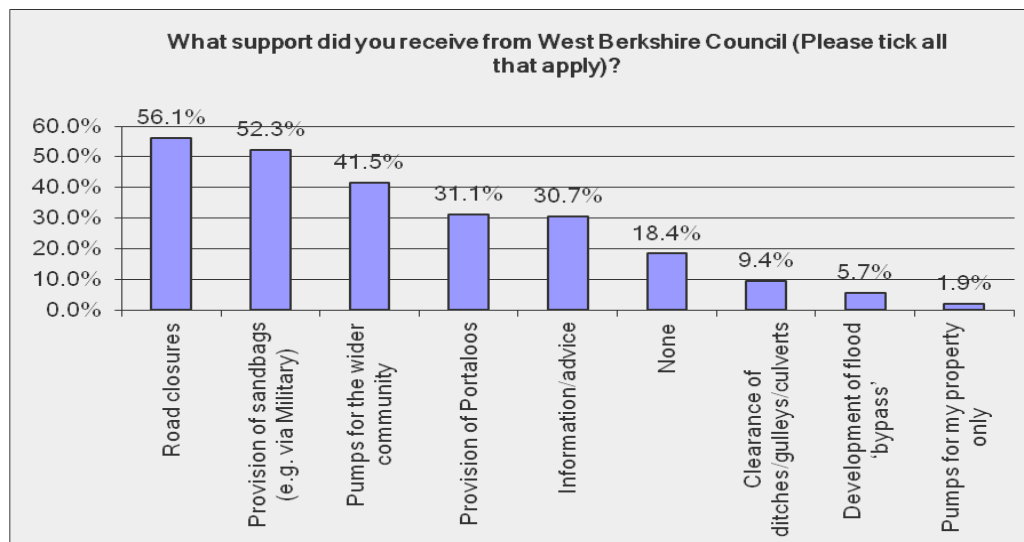
A significant proportion 35% were calling up regarding updates on their area. This may have been because the information sent to communities and on the website was not sufficient; was not accessible or that some people felt more reassured by talking to someone in person.

28% of responders contacted the Council about sewage issues, although this is the responsibility of Thames Water. A smaller proportion (2.2%) reported issues with rivers, although this was the responsibility of the Environment Agency. One consultee commented that they contacted the Council because they were not getting answers from these agencies.

RESIDENTS Key Points 11:

- The calls requesting sandbags and other flood defences need to be carefully considered since there is no duty on the Council to protect individual homes.
- There is lack of clarity in the communities about who is responsible for what.

18. Responders were asked what actual **support was provided them by the Council?**



212 residents responded to the question. A wide range of responses were provided ranging from road closures (56%) to provision of pumps to individual properties (2%).

Where support was provided it could be split into 3 areas:

- a. Physical - Protecting individual properties – provision of sandbags (52.3%); pumps for properties (1.9%)
- b. Physical Protecting & Support in wider community – road closures (56.1%); pumps for communities (41.5%); provision of portaloos (31.1%); clearances of ditches/culverts and gulleys (9.4%) and digging flood 'bypasses' (5.7%).
- c. Provision of information (30.7%).

In a. above the requests made were in relation to individual properties and therefore it would be expected that property owners would have plans and flood defences in place themselves.

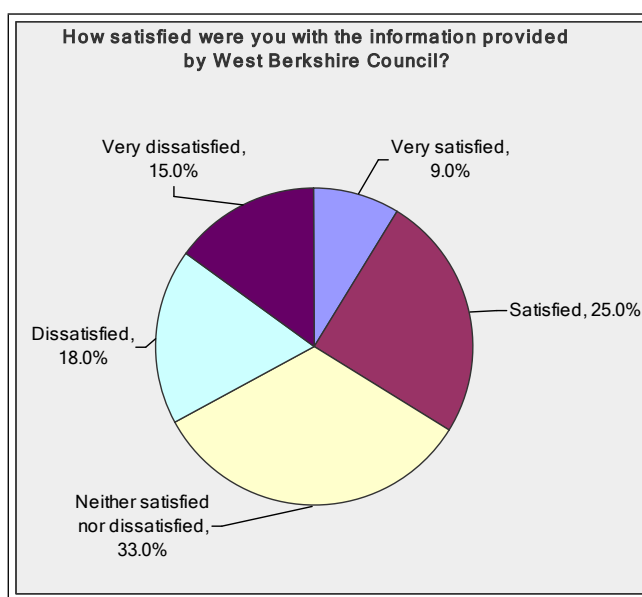
Whereas in b. above these could perhaps be more seen more as attempting to *reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of an emergency*, in the terms of the CCA and therefore the Council and other Cat 1 and Cat 2 agencies had a responsibility.

Finally with respect to c. above this does fall into the Warning and Informing element of the CCA of Cat 1 & Cat 2 agencies.

RESIDENTS Key Points/Comments 12:

- There is a need for residents to have an understanding as to who does what and what their responsibilities are and what the Council is not responsible for.

19. Responders to the survey were asked if they contacted the Council **if they were satisfied with the information provided.**



Of the 182 people who answered the question 34% confirmed the information provided to be satisfactory or very satisfactory; 33% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. However a third were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the information provided.

20. The provision and satisfaction with information provided by the Council was further assessed when responders where asked about **how they contacted the Council and how satisfied they were with the response.**

Answer Options	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Response Count
Phoned customer services during the day	7 (12%)	18 (31%)	9 (15%)	14 (24%)	11 (19%)	59
Phoned emergency contact centre out of office hours	1 (3%)	9 (30%)	6 (20%)	3 (10%)	11(37%)	30
Phoned Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)	3 (11%)	9 (33%)	3 (11%)	8 (30%)	6 (22%)	26
Email	4 (17%)	13 (58%)	4 (17%)	0 (0%)	3 (11%)	24
Online reporting	1(7%)	2 (14%)	3 (21%)	4 (29%)	4 (29%)	14
Other	4 (44%)	1 (11%)	1 (11%)	1 (11%)	2 (22%)	9

84 responders answered the question.

On reviewing how the responder was in contact with the Council and their satisfaction with the information/service provided then:

- **57.2%** were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the **on-line reporting system**,
- **51.8%** were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the **Emergency Operations Centre**
- **46.7%** were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the **Out of Hours Contact Centre**
- **42.3%** were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the **Office Hours contact Centre**.
- However, **70%** were satisfied or very satisfied with the **Email**

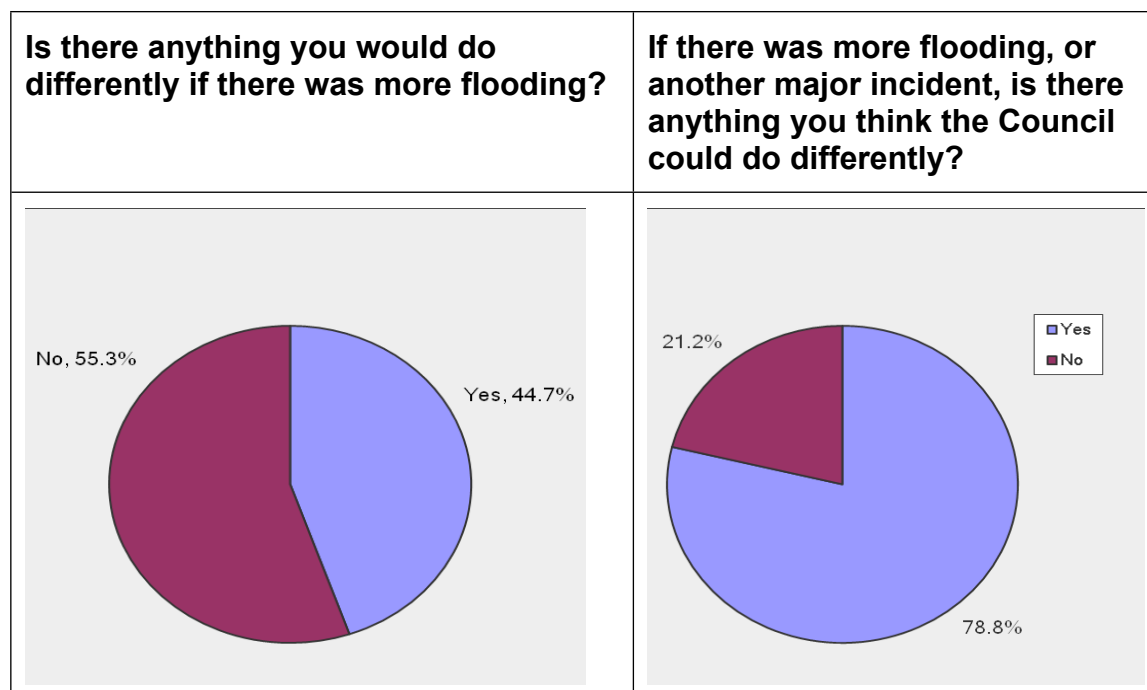
With respect to the 'other' comments which provided a satisfied or very satisfied figure of 55.5% these tended to relate to direct contact with specific officers or Councilors'.

RESIDENTS Key Points 13:

- The majority of contact with the Council was via phone (71%)
- The least used (7%) and with least satisfaction (57%) was the online reporting system.
- The greatest satisfaction was when responders emailed the Council. (70%). This may be because the officer involved had more time to consider the response with other officers if necessary. It is however resource intensive in the EOC.

What would the responding residents do differently and what would they suggest the Council does differently in the future.

21. A key element of the debriefing process is for everyone to consider what they could do differently the next time. To this end there were a number of questions set for responders to consider **what they would do differently the next time** and **what they think the Council could do differently**.



From the 193 responders, 79% believed the Council could do more the next time. By contrast, from the 188 who responded as to whether they would do anything differently the next time 45% said they would.

22. Responders were then asked to provide details as to what the **Council could do differently**. The responses, of which there were 146, have been split into the following themes and points as set out below.

Themes	Number of Comments	Summary or points raised
Resources	58	<p>This has been split into the following suggested areas of improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sandbags (26) – to be provided by the Council to be out in the communities, to be there a lot quicker and to individual homes. ○ Pumps (12) – to be provided by the Council, quicker, more details as to where being pumped to so as not to create knock on effect. ○ Officers in the communities (11) (LA Liaison Officers) to be the face of the Council to answer community questions. ○ Waste Bins (3) to be provided in the communities and collected in advance of flooding. ○ Portaloos (3) – more to be provided, to be cleaner and quicker in their delivery. ○ Road signs (1) – such as flood, road closed etc to be stored in communities to be put out quicker.
Maintenance	45	<p>Of the comments received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 14 referred to improved maintenance of Thames Water assets ○ 13 referred to the Env Agency improving the maintenance on the rivers (weed management, regarding, removing blockages, managing riparian owners who do not do their responsibilities) ○ 15 referred to improvement of surface water drains & ditches ○ 3 referred to improved management of ditches/drains/culverts of private landowners.
Communications	42	<p>The improvements suggested in relation to communications include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specific information improvements in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Public Health Info ○ Bin Collections ○ Roles and Responsibilities ○ The communication routes to the wider communities – not only by email or internet. ○ Web Pages not being up to date or providing information ○ More use of local radio

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Much more general JOINT information as to what is happening and where it is happening and by whom ○ A need for more WBC officers in the communities ○ Support for public meetings ○ Ensuring all staff in the EOC, contact centres, out in the area are aware of the current situations to give the most accurate detail to the communities
Flood Defences	27	<p>These 26 comments refer to specific flood defence type schemes (rather than routine maintenance). They include specific areas to suggest diversions/ditches to be created, storage areas for water, dredging etc.</p> <p>Suggestion that the Council could be more involved in advising on flood defences for properties</p>
Roads	11	<p>The improvements suggested in this area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More closure of footpaths ○ More road closures – and quicker ○ Diversion routes being put in place and signposted ○ Protection put in place where roads open but there is flood water to protect homes. ○ Fords to be closed earlier ○ Enforcement of Road Closures
Joint Working/Comm and & Control	10	<p>The improvements suggested in relation to joint working and command and control included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Joint preventative work – including the improvements ongoing with the Flood Forums in place ○ More visible joint working of all the emergency services, Council and the military. ○ More joint working with the communities and the other responders. ○ More communications in relation to this joint working.
Response times	10	<p>Appearance of Council not being up to speed and responding slowly as a result.</p> <p>Reviewing communications may assist in resolving this issue</p>
Utilities (other than Maintenance issues)	5	<p>Recommendations to put more pressure on the utilities – Thames Water and Scottish & Southern Electricity to improve their services.</p>
Listen	5	<p>The comments were in relation to listening to communities as often local knowledge can help the responders – esp some historical information.</p>
Members	4	<p>The feedback referred to some positive action by</p>

		Members but also improvements by way of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thinking and acting in best interest of constituents rather than external visitors ○ Visiting their communities ○ Be part of the communications process
Officers	3	Concerns raised in relation to the empathy of a few officers to the community in difficult times.
Development Control	2	More consideration should be given to further development in flood risk areas
Plans	1	Suggestion that the plans are reviewed
Learning from Others	1	This referred to learning from the Somerset Levels.
Companies	1	This specifically referred to the fact that the Royal Mail could not deliver in some areas.
Schools	1	Suggested some training in schools to children about flood water risks
Vulnerable	1	Recommended more direct communication with the vulnerable – not only those known to the Council but GP's and known in the community.
Misc Points Noted	15	These comments referred to specific facts rather than suggested improvements.

Of the 242 individual points made from the 146 responders the main issues raised were:

- 24% resources: sandbags/pumps/people etc
- 19% maintenance: Thames Water, Environment Agency and WBC assets
- 17% communications
- 11% flood defences

RESIDENTS Key Points 14:

- There is a high expectation of all those responding as to what the Council should do. (This was also the feedback from the Somerset Levels debrief.)
- There is a lack of understanding as to who is responsible for what, including the residents' responsibilities. There is a lack of understanding within the consultees about how all agencies work together during incidents.
- There are a number of flood forums in place with action plans which will pick up some of the specific issues relating to roles and responsibilities, specific engineering solutions in at risk communities and the promotion of responsibilities.

23. When asked what the resident responders **would do differently next time**. 86 responders provided information which has been split into a number of themes:

Actions to be taken	No responding
Put in Property level protection or flood defences	39
Call the Council or other agencies	19
Nothing	9
Prepare more and act sooner	7
Move out	6
Get more involved with the Community efforts	3
Sell	2
Do riparian ownership work to ditches and rivers	1
Ensure Insurance is up to date	1

RESIDENTS Key Points/Comments 16:

- There is a high expectation of all those responding that the Council and other agencies can prevent the flooding and they will therefore call us earlier or more often.
- There is a lack of understanding as to who is responsible for what including the residents' responsibilities is demonstrated. – Repeat from above
- A large number 39 (42%) are considering their own property level protection and flood defences to be more self reliant in a future event.
- However, there are 37 responders (highlighted in red) (43%) who appear to be reliant on others or hoping that it will not occur again rather than doing something about the risk.

Recommendations

- i. The Council should review the drains and gulleys it is responsible for in relation to areas where road closures/flooding was known to affect communities
- ii. Thames Water should review the sewers in the areas affected by flooding in order to reduce the impact.
- iii. Residents in flood risk areas should consider property level protection including the house and ancillary elements e.g. septic tanks.
- iv. The Council should consider any new development proposals which may be in known flood risk areas such that not only is the building considered but also the means of access – for occupiers and emergency responders.
- v. Whilst all residents found accommodation without support from the Council, consideration should be given to how the situation would be managed if there were a significant number of residents to be accommodated for an extended period of time.
- vi. Nationally, work in relation to insurance for flood risk properties should continue to support at risk residents, including advantages for those installing property level defences.
- vii. At local and national level promotional activity should be undertaken to encourage residents to sign up for the most appropriate flood alert for their circumstances in order that they have time to protect themselves. This could also be bolstered at community level with community notification means to support all in the community.
- viii. The Government review the PLP scheme to allow more at risk properties to receive grants or loans to support them in protecting their properties.
- ix. The Council, Communities and other agencies should jointly investigate temporary flood barrier schemes or flood defence schemes where appropriate. More permanent schemes will take time to come to fruition therefore options to put in more strategic temporary flood defences should be investigated so as to protect properties without the significant resources being required as in 2013/14.
- x. The Council should work with Town and Parish Councils to encourage more community planning and community engagement, especially, in urban communities to encourage self help and supporting each other.
- xi. A communications strategy covering the means of communications to communities should be developed to include who it goes to, how it is sent out etc.
- xii. Development of Community Emergency Plans and Volunteers should be encouraged and supported.
- xiii. More detailed information on roles and responsibilities should be provided to communities.
- xiv. All communities should be encouraged to develop a network of Community Resilience Volunteers. (CRVs)
- xv. Joint training should be encouraged between communities and involving other agencies.
- xvi. Communities with existing CRV's should encourage more in the community to be involved.
- xvii. The roles of these CRV's should be reviewed
- xviii. Community plans should consider how they will increase the communications conduit to their wider community.
- xix. Any community emergency planning needs to take into account that, whilst community resilience volunteers may be 'allocated' areas in their direct neighbourhood, to support, there needs to be flexibility for others from different areas to come to help when whole neighbourhoods are affected.
- xx. Provision of some support e.g. portaloos needs to be considered in more detail with utility companies.
- xxi. Contact centres (both during office and out of hours) need to be investigated as to how they could support the response better. This may be by way of more briefs from the EOC or a Liaison officer in them to support them with some calls.
- xxii. The EOC contact process needs to be reviewed in that calls direct from the public should not go into the EOC since it is a coordination centre of the Council response and not the contact centre.

Appendix F Business Survey Report

The primary aim of the consultation was to seek the views of local businesses affected by the flooding to help identify potential areas of improvement in the way the Council responds to emergencies, to gauge how businesses viewed the response of the Council and other agencies; to assess the effectiveness of their own Business Continuity Plans and to assess what businesses did for themselves or their community this time and would consider doing in the future. Responses were collected via an online survey and on hard copies.

A total of 9 businesses responded to the survey, however 6 responded for the majority of questions.. Due to the low number of respondents, the findings of this survey can not be extrapolated or be considered as representative of the population. To put into context there were over 35 business flooded and there are in the region of 13,500 businesses in West Berkshire. Therefore only 0.07% responded.

Of the responders that gave details of their location they were from the Lambourn Valley (3) and Streatley (1), areas which were flooded.

2 were micro business (0 – 9 employees) and 3 were Small and Medium Enterprises (10 – 249 employees)

Regardless of the small response from businesses below is the analysis of the responses including in the case of free text answers, key and recurring points are presented

To what extent were the responding businesses affected by the flooding and how they were flooded?

1. Respondents were asked to confirm ***what caused the flooding in their area*** from a choice of options. They could choose more than one option.

Reason for flooding	No of responders
Don't know	1
Groundwater (when the water table rises)	6
River water (when the river bursts its banks)	2
Surface water (when rainwater is unable to drain away)	4
Sewage	2
Other (please specify)	1

8 businesses responded to the question.

In relation to the other comments these relate to not being flooded,

BUSINESSES Key Points 1:

- It is important for businesses to understand the flood risks they could be faced with, and any other risk, in order that they can prepare a response to ensure they can continue operating.

2. On asked what the **effects of the flooding** was on the responders were:

Answer Options	Response Count
Property became an island (surrounded by water)	2
Property flooded internally (working space)	5
Restricted access routes	6
Restricted water supply	0
Sewage issues	2
Staff unable to get to work	3
Other (please specify)	3

8 businesses responded.

The greatest impact was the restriction of access routes followed by being flooded internally. The knock on effect of this was limited access to businesses, including staff and therefore a financial impact.

This financial impact included having to leave premises; cancel events and not being able to work on water logged ground.

The comments made with respect to other impacts included limited access by customers/parking etc, not being affected and flooded drains.

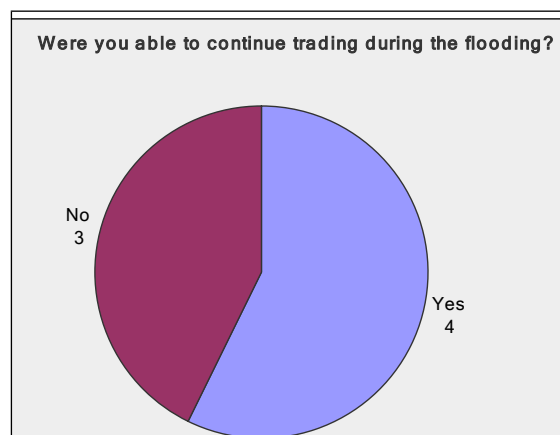
BUSINESSES Key Points/Comments 2:

- The impacts on businesses is similar to residents. Please refer to the Residents Survey analysis.
- The financial losses can be significant due to the knock on effects of the flooding e.g. clients not getting access etc

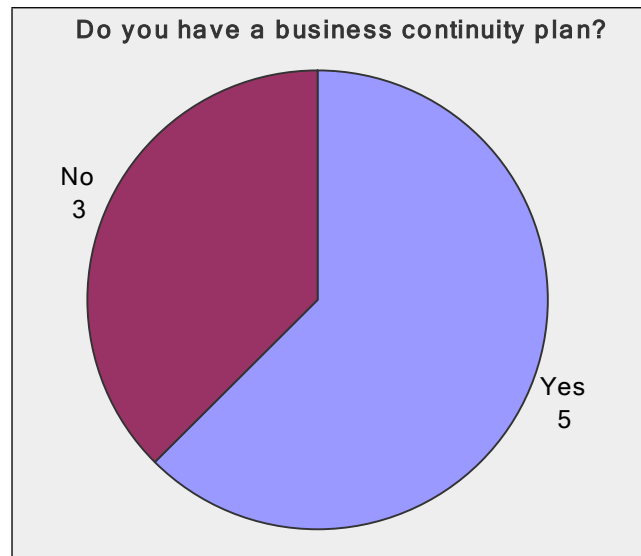
How prepared were the responding businesses for flooding/adverse weather?

3. Responders were asked to confirm **if they continued trading or not during the floods.**

7 businesses responded to the question, 4 continued, 3 did not.



4. Responders were also asked if they had a **business continuity plan**.



Of the 8 responders 5 confirmed they had a BCP.

5. They were then asked **if they activated their business continuity plan?**

Answer Options	Response Count
Yes	2
No	2

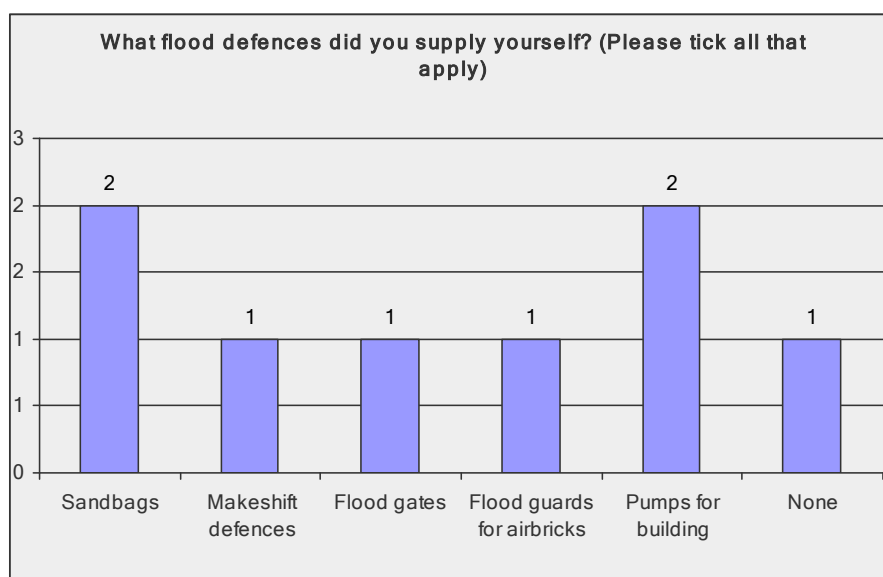
4 businesses responded with a 50:50 split in the activation of the plans.

6. Responders were asked **if their business continuity plan had been effective?**

1 business responded to confirm that it had been effective.

7. Responders were asked to confirm what **flood defences responders supplied themselves**.

6 businesses responded to the question.



The responses could be split into the same categories as the residents' survey i.e.:

- Businesses with prior preparation by way of property level protection which would require planning and purchase in advance (4)

- Businesses who took immediate actions during the event - includes sandbags etc (3)
- Businesses who used no flood defences – this was referred to in the comments and was due to the wide area affected (landowner).

8. Responders were asked if they were **signed up to receive flood alerts from Floodline** and if so in **what format they received the alerts**.

Answer Options	Response Count
Yes	3
No	3

6 businesses responded with 3 receiving alerts

Answer Options	Response Count
Text	1
Email	3
Phone	3

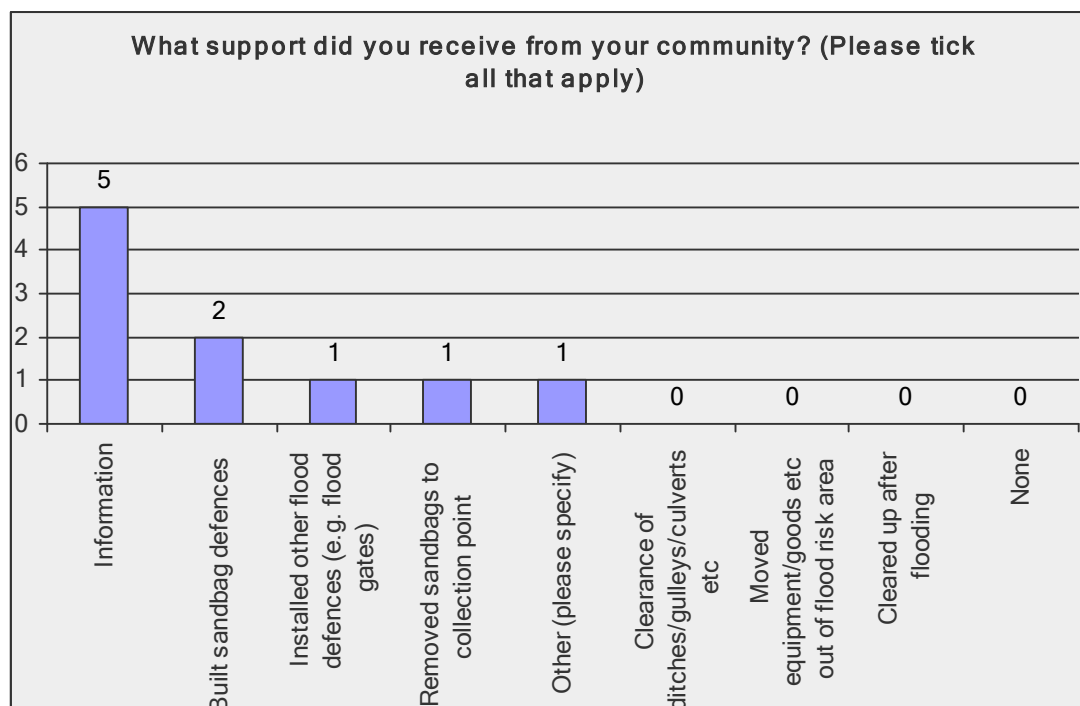
Of the 3 that received the alerts, all 3 received the alerts via email and phone calls, one also received alerts via text message.

BUSINESSES Key Points/Comments 3:

- From this survey more than half the businesses stopped trading during the floods.
- It is not known from this survey the potential losses experienced
- The responses to the Business Continuity questions suggested a gap in knowledge and understanding of business continuity. This was reflected in the fact that 50% of the 6 responders indicated they would like advice and support to develop their plans.
- The responses to the provision of preplanned flood defences and signing up to floodline alerts suggest that the businesses had not undertaken a full review of the potential risks to their businesses and therefore their Business Continuity plans would be flawed.
- Whilst this is a small survey it is worrying since the impact on the business is significant if they have to stop operating for even short periods of time.

What support did the responding businesses get or provide to the local community?

9. Responders were asked **what support the businesses received from their communities?**



6 responded to the question. The main support provided was by way of information (5). Other support was by way of building and removing flood defences. Other support was provided by the community by way of loan of equipment e.g. pumps and provision of car parking to allow business to continue.

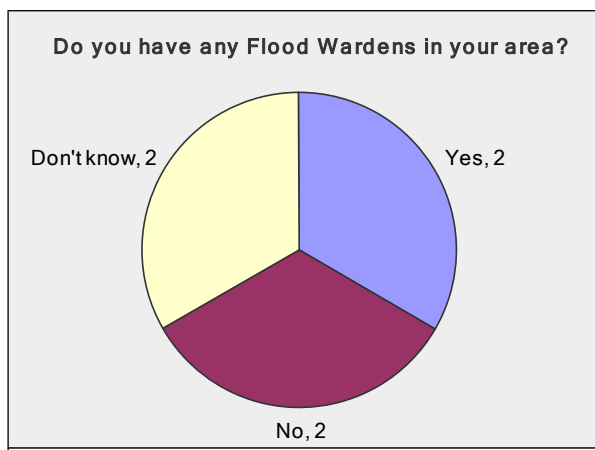
Without knowing what the business type it makes it difficult to assess whether the businesses responding were integral to the communities and therefore efforts were made to support them it was interesting to note that the biggest support was by way of information suggesting the route of information flow is essential in communities.

10. Responders were asked **what support they provided to their community.**

Answer Options	Response Count
Provision of drop in centre	0
Provision of refreshments	0
Other (please specify)	1
Provision of equipment	2
Unable to help	3

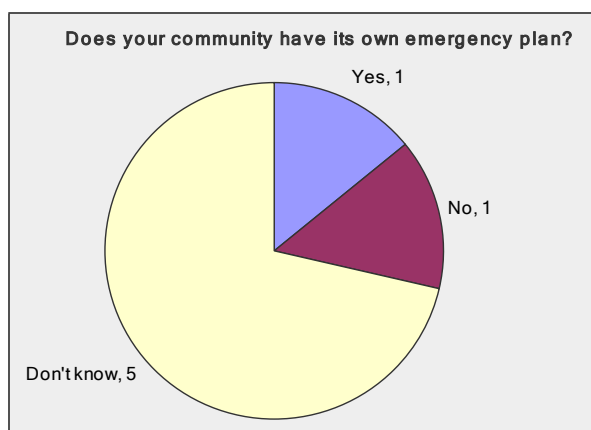
Of the 6 businesses who answered the question 3 stated they were unable to help, whilst others provided equipment or with respect to other this related continuing to work with their customers.

11. Responders were asked if they knew if there **were any Flood Wardens in their area**



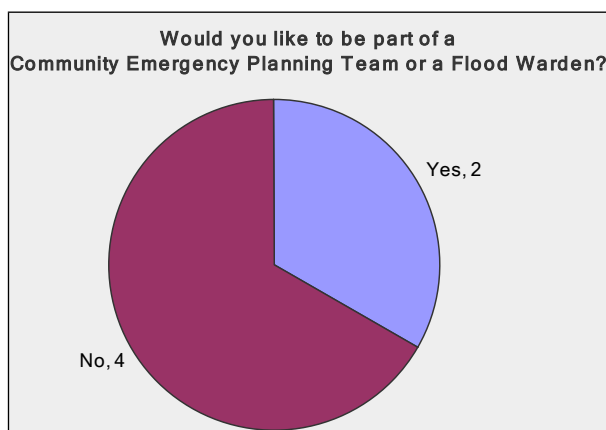
The response was split evenly between the 6 responders.

12. Responders were asked if the knew **if there was a Community Emergency Plan in their area and if so whether it was activated?**



From the 7 responders, the majority (5) did not know. The 1 responder who knew there was a Community Emergency Plan also knew it had been activated.

13. Responders were also asked if their business **would like to be part of a Community Emergency Planning Team or Flood Warden?**



From the 6 responders to this question 4 said no.

BUSINESSES Key Points 4:

- All of the responses suggest that the responders to this survey are not very involved with their community or due to their size (3 of 5 businesses have less than 10 employees) they cannot be involved easily in some incidents when they are affected themselves.

Where did the businesses get their information about what was going on and how did they rate it?

From the responses earlier one of the main support the community gave the businesses was in relation to information. .

14. As a result the responders were asked how they found out what was happening in their community?

Answer Options	Face to face	Email	Website	Twitter	Facebook	Radio/TV	Publication	Not applicable
West Berkshire Council	2	2	3	0	0	0	0	0
West Berkshire District Councillor	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local Town/Parish Councillor	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Flood warden	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Community group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Environment Agency	1	1	3	1	0	0	0	1
Thames Water	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Local media	1	0	2	1	1	2	1	1
National media	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	1

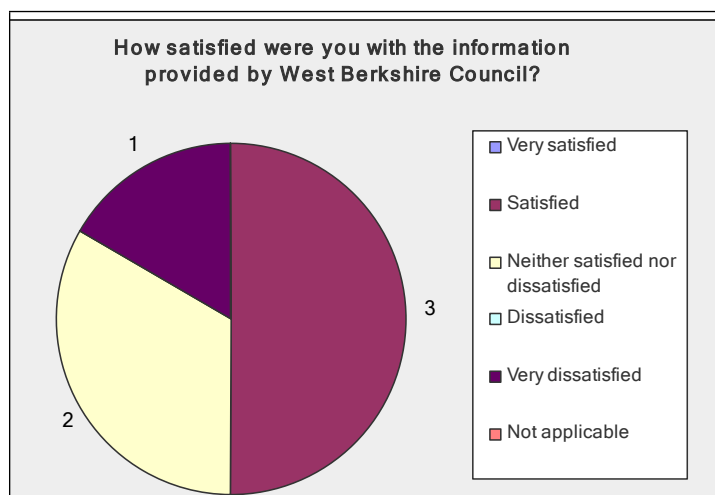
6 businesses responded to the question

Whilst a much smaller sample the responses were in line with those provided by residents when asked the same question.

BUSINESSES Key Points/Comments 5:

- Communications in an emergency with accurate information is essential
- The community information updates were most commonly spread by the communities, face to face or via email.
- Council, EA and TW websites were used for updates to a lesser extent.
- Local media, TV and radio were used.
- Social media was not a commonly used means of communication.

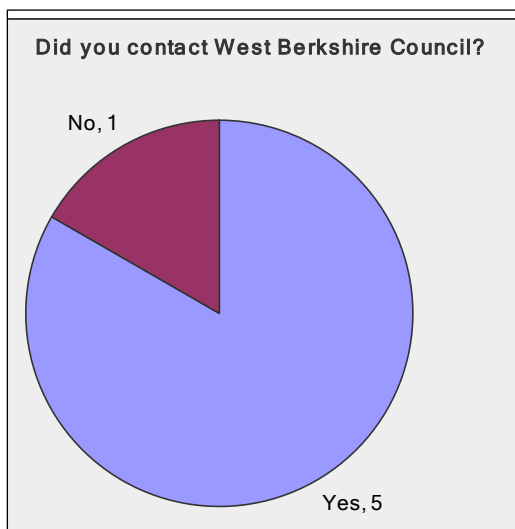
15. When asked how satisfied the responders were with the information provided by West Berkshire Council.



From the 6 responders only 1 was very dissatisfied.

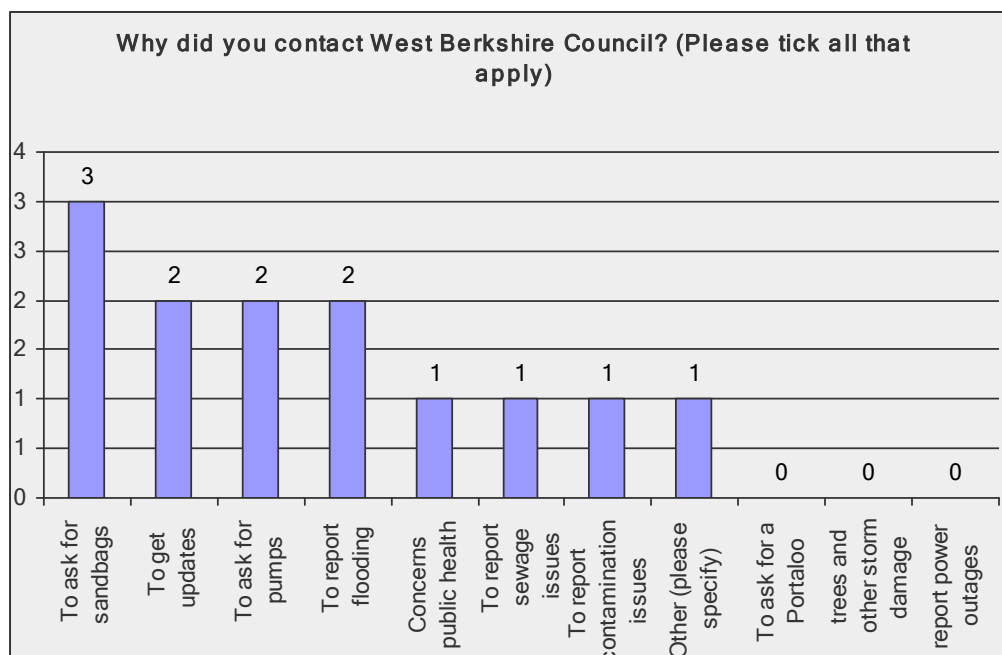
What support did the responding businesses get from West Berkshire Council and how did they evaluate this support.

16. Responders were asked if they contacted the Council during the floods?



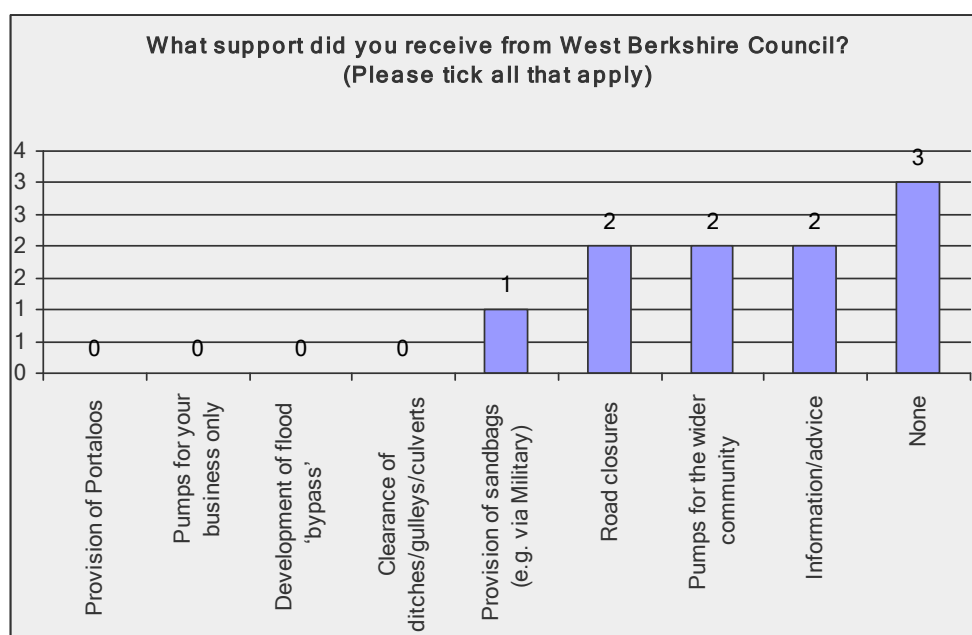
6 responded with 5 confirming they contacted the Council.

17. Responders were asked why they contacted the Council.



5 responders answered the question with a spread of requests made. The other was in relation to report a badly damaged road.

18. Responders were asked what support they received from the Council?



BUSINESSES Key Points 6:

- Both the contact and support provided to businesses included:
 - Provision temporary flood defences (sandbags) suggesting that businesses had not taken flood risk seriously for their premises.
 - Provision of information and updates suggesting the communication routes in communities and the information provided by the Council was insufficient or not getting to the whole community.

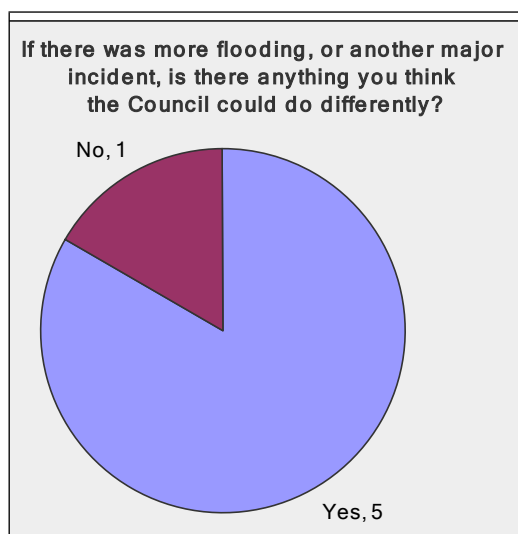
19. Responders were asked how they contacted the Council and to provide a level of satisfaction with the customer service provided?

Answer Options	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Phoned customer services during the day	1	1	0	0	1
Phoned emergency contact centre out of office hours	0	0	0	1	1
Phoned Emergency Operations Centre	0	0	0	0	0
Email	0	1	0	0	1
Online reporting	0	1	0	0	1

5 businesses responded. Due to the small survey however no clear trend or analysis can be made.

What would the responding businesses do differently and what would they suggest the Council does differently in the future.

20. Responders were asked whether they believed there was something else the Council could do and if so what.



6 businesses responded with 5 saying yes.

The suggestions are summarised below:

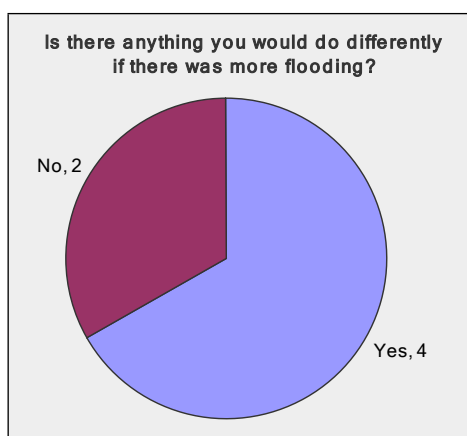
Start drainage and flood relief work prior to the flooding starting.
Provide support by officers being in the communities assessing the situation and getting information from the community.
Improve communications
Provide sandbags at strategic locations.
Get an alternative route for the water installed before the next event
Providing pumps would be welcome
Signs at Northcroft explaining the area was designed to flood to protect homes, it

was not safe to play in as it may contain raw sewage etc.

Signs explaining why this was being done esp if unmanned pumps are in situ.

From the above responses it is clear in some cases that there is a lack of understanding about the responsibilities and priorities of the Council and businesses. There is therefore a process of raising awareness that needs to take place to provide this information along with advising businesses about business continuity.

21. Responders were asked if they would do something differently the next time and if so what?



6 responded to the question with 4 stating they would do things differently the next time.

- 2 responders advised they would be seeking means of installation of flood defences or planning for a similar event this year
- 2 advised they would contact the Council and keep doing so until they got a response or would help the community less..

BUSINESSES Key Points 7:

- There are high expectations as to what the Council should do.
- There is lack of knowledge about roles and responsibilities including those of businesses.

Recommendations

- i. In order to find out more as to what support businesses need to improve their resilience a more detailed, wider survey is recommended.
- ii. Any community developing a Community Emergency Plan should be encouraged to include businesses in their plans, to encourage mutual support.
- iii. A communications strategy should be developed to include informing businesses of?.

Appendix G Flood Wardens, Town & Parish Councils and WBC Ward Members Survey Report

WBC consulted with Flood Wardens, Town & Parish Councils and WBC Ward Members in order to help identify potential areas of improvement in the way the Council responds to emergencies; to gauge how they viewed the response of the Council and other agencies, and to assess what they did for themselves or their community and would consider doing in the future.

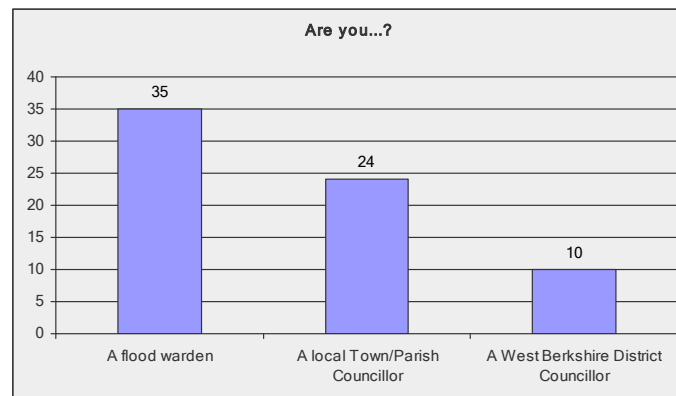
Responses were collected via an online survey and on hard copies.

57 people responded to the survey. However on reviewing the raw data it was clear that 8 had logged on and registered initially but then provided no further feedback. Therefore the analysis has been based on a response of 49.

(Due to the low number of respondents, the findings of this survey can not be extrapolated or be considered as representative of the population.)

What support was being provided to what communities and by whom?

1. Responders were asked **what they were in their community**:



Therefore of the:

- i. 63 Flood Wardens that West Berkshire Council links in with 56% responded,
- ii. 63 Town & Parish Councils & Parish Meetings in West Berkshire 38% responded,
- iii. 52 Ward Members 19% responded.

It should be noted with respect to the Town & Parish Councils, that there may have been more than one response from the same community therefore the actual percentage of responses from the number of communities may be lower.

FW/Ward/T&PC's Key Points 1:

- It should be noted that some responders may undertake more than one role in their community in an emergency situation this means there would be a scarcity of resource. Since they are volunteers this could be a longer term issue.

2. When asked **which ward the responder was supporting during the floods** the response was shown in the table below in red:

Ward Area	Communities in Ward Area with flooded properties	No of responders supporting the Ward.	Community Emergency Plan	Flood Wardens	No of Properties flooded 2013/14	Flood Forum
Aldermaston	Aldermaston,	2	YES			
Basildon	Streatley	2				
Birch Copse		0				
Bucklebury		6	YES No	YES		Pang Valley
Burghfield	Burghfield Bridge, Sheffield Bottom & Pingewood	1		YES - residents in area	18	
Calcot	Holybrook,	2				
Chieveley		0	YES			
Cold Ash		0				
Compton	Hamstead Norreys	5		YES	2	Pang Valley
Downlands	East Ilsley, West Ilsley	2		YES	20	Pang Valley
Hungerford		0				
Kintbury	Hamstead Marshall	0			1	
Lambourn Valley	Upper Lambourn, Lambourn, Eastbury, East Garston, Great Shefford, Weston,	7	No No No No YES No No	YES	34	Lambourn Valley
Mortimer	Padworth	0			4	
Newbury Clay Hill		2	No		36	
Newbury Falkland		0				
Newbury Greenham		0				
Newbury Northcroft		1		YES	5	Newbury FF
Newbury St Johns		0				
Newbury Victoria		5				
Pangbourne		5	YES	YES	4	Pang Valley
Purley on Thames		10	YES	YES	29	Purley FF
Speen	Bagnor Winterbourne	3			1	
Sulhamstead		1	Draft			
Thatcham Central		0		YES		Thatcham FF
Thatcham		0				

North						
Thatcham South and Crookham		0				
Thatcham West		0				
Theale		2	YES		5	
Westwood		0				

From the data provided, Purley can be identified as the place where most support was forthcoming. In this Community there is also the most mature flood warden system and the largest number of flood wardens (13). It was also affected significantly during the Dec 13 and Jan 14 floods.

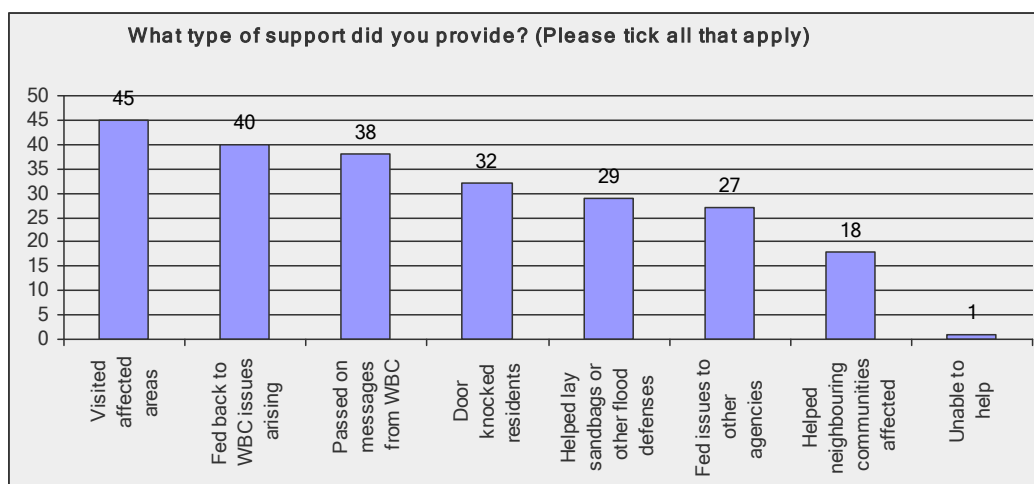
The table also provided details of the communities which have flood wardens, emergency plans and are involved in Flood Forums. The Wards which are shaded in light blue have communities at risk from fluvial (river) or groundwater flooding specifically. Other Wards may be at risk of surface water flooding however this is less predictable; In 2007 this was the major cause of flooding in Thatcham.

The above shows that those responding to the survey are from communities at risk or which have been affected by flooding. 19 of the 30 wards are at risk of flooding with feedback being received from 17 of the 19 at risk wards (89%). The 2 wards at risk of flooding that gave no feedback were Hungerford and Kintbury. There was feedback from 1 ward not normally associated as major risk ward for flooding. Communities who had Emergency Plans and Flood Wardens in place were also more likely to respond.

FW/Ward/T&PC's Key Points 2:

- Where communities have been affected in the past by an incident they are more likely to respond. However, despite Thatcham being significantly affected in 2007 there was no response from that community.
- Communities are more likely to be engaged and have plans, wardens etc if they have been affected before.
- Rural communities are more likely to be engaged with the process than those in more urban settings.

3. Responders were also asked **what type of support they provided in the communities?**



Of the 48 people who answered this question, the largest response was in relation to visiting affected areas. It may be considered that since they could tick all that applied, when visiting the areas they also passed information to and from WBC, checked on residents etc.

In respect of other support provided:

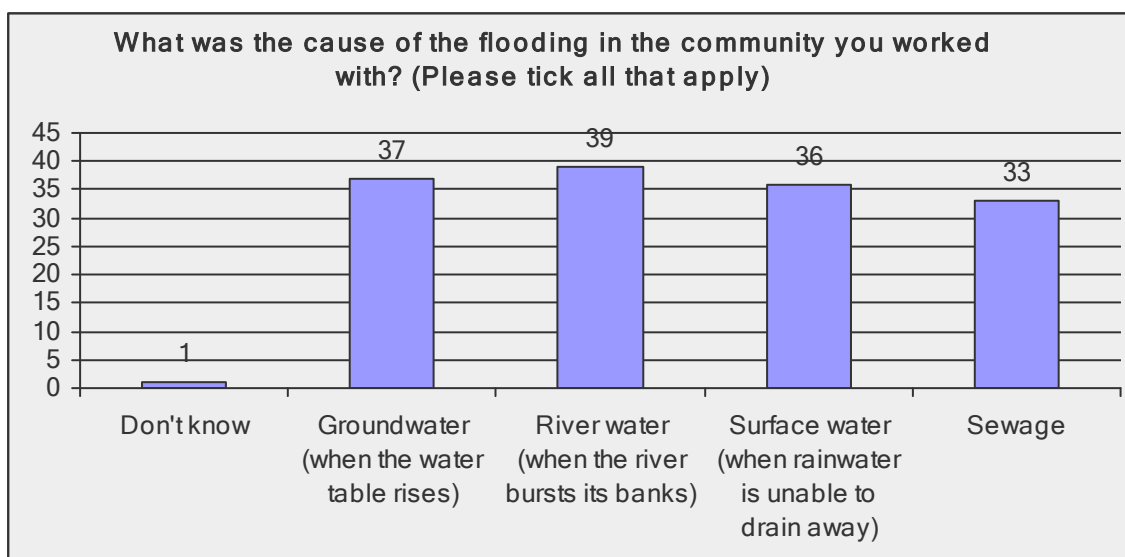
- | | |
|---|---|
| ○ Provision of leaflets | 2 |
| ○ Setting up a social media network | 1 |
| ○ Monitoring river levels | 3 |
| ○ Sourcing Equipment | 4 |
| ○ Supporting agencies e.g. TVP, SSE etc | 2 |
| ○ Collecting shopping and moving waste for vulnerable | 1 |
| ○ Monitoring empty properties | 1 |
| ○ Coordinating the local response | 1 |

FW/Ward/T&PC's Key Points/Comments 3:

- Those responding were heavily involved in a number of activities in their communities.
- Provision of information to and from WBC was high on the agenda and involved activities such as provision of leaflets and setting up local social media network.

To what extent did the respondents consider the communities were affected by the flooding and understand why they flooded?

4. Responders were asked what was the cause of the flooding in the community they worked with?

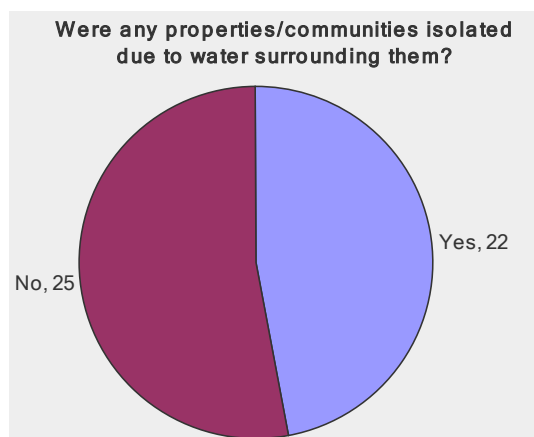


The 47 responses received demonstrate a good understanding of flooding causes across the area. The response figures also link with the different types of flooding across West Berkshire and the link they have with each other (See Residents Survey and Main report)

FW/Ward/T&PC's Key Points/Comments 4:

- All types of flooding occurred over the winter in West Berkshire
- The response and preparation needed is very different for each flooding types, particularly for property level protection.
- It is important that those that are involved in 'leading' their community know what the risks are in their area, know what happened in their area and the impact on their community

5. Responders were asked if there **were any properties/communities isolated due to water surrounding them?**



22 out of 47 answered in the affirmative. 47 responders answered the question with 22 .

6. Responders were asked **what was the impact on 'normal' life in the community they worked with?**

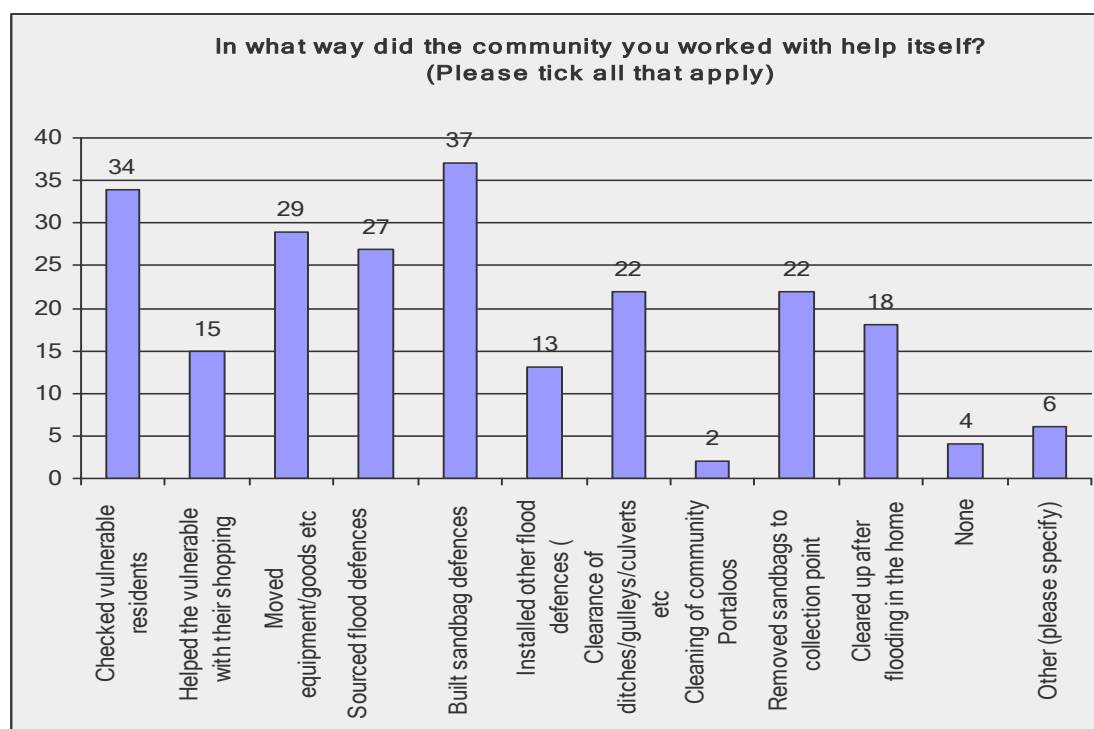
45 responded to this question with a wide range of free text responses provided. Set out below are the main themes of the impact on the communities:

Impact	No of responders
Limited Access	25
Feeling of isolation esp vulnerable when no power	9
Normal 'life' disrupted	7
Stress/Tension	6
Waste Water issues	5
Businesses affected	4
People moving out or evacuated	4
Children's Play areas affected	3
Time off Work	3
Bow waves	2
Bus Services suspended or diverted	2
Delivery issues including fuel	2

Sales of homes fell through	2
Schools closed	2
Broken Sleep	1
Cars a long way from the home	1
Farm Land flooded	1
Garden Ruined	1
Infection or contamination in area	1
Internal Flooding	1
Lengthy diversions	1
Long journeys on foot	1
Roads Damaged	1
Rubbish not collected	1

The table shows a wide range of issues that impacted communities across West Berkshire. Access and the feeling of isolation were the most frequently reported. However,, the impact on individuals of those less frequently reported such as internal flooding of properties should not be underestimated.

7. In order to find out what happened to overcome these issues responders were asked **what support was put in place and what they did in the community to help itself?**



Other responses included:

Support put in place	No of Responders
Working Together	13
Checks on community including vulnerable	5
Flood Wardens put in place	3
Canoes to move people around	2
Car Passes to assist with road closures	1
Worked with TVP, WBC & TW	6
Portaloos provided	3
Pumps provided	1
Sandbags Sources	1
Shopping	1

Village Hall Opened for food on Xmas Day	1
Rest Centre set up	1
Roads closed	2
Plan Activated	1
Waste Bins sorted out	1
Establishing a Community Flood Watch team	1
Removing a section of river bank	1
Establishing a rota to look after the pumps	1
Set up liaison with WBC & TW	1
Opened up Village Hall for teas, coffees and information point.	1
Cleared up public areas after the flooding	1

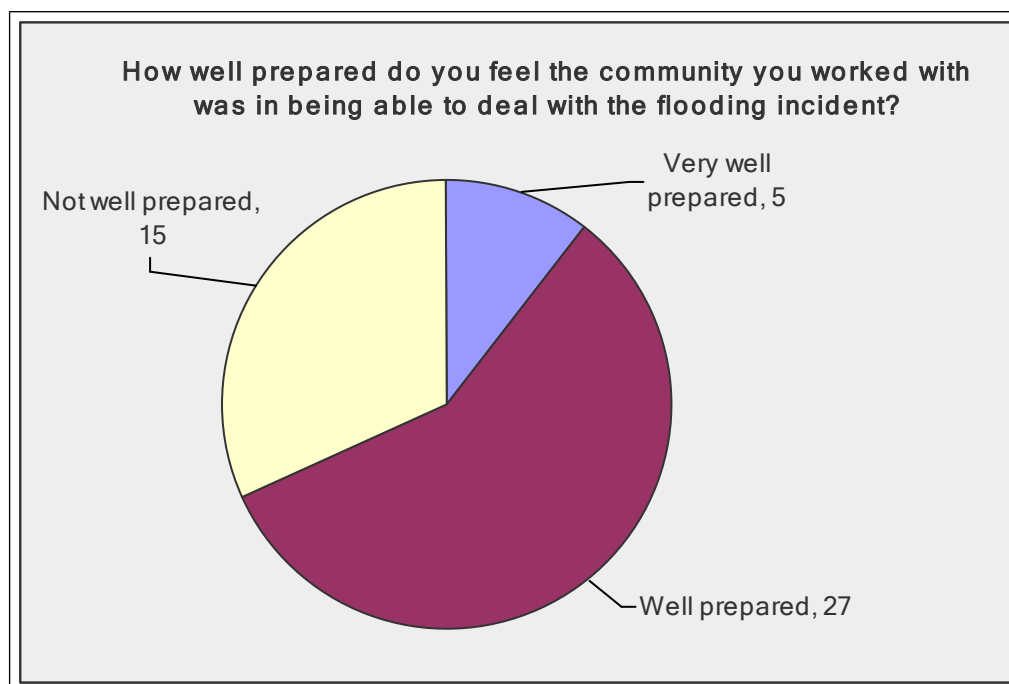
From the table and the separate comments made, a wide range of actions were taken across the communities by individuals and the communities together.

FW/Ward/T&PC's Key Points/Comments 5:

- The impacts of the adverse weather are extensive
- Some impacts are relatively short lived e.g. broken sleep, roads closed. However some e.g. flooded homes, sales of properties and stress can have an impact for a long time.
- The limited access (roads or surrounded by water 5&6) and the feeling of isolation are likely to be linked to stress/tension.

How prepared were the communities in advance by way of plans, resources and working together?

8. Responders were asked **how prepared they believed their community was?**



9. Consultees were asked to expand on why they believed their community was prepared or not. 30 responders provided information, (5 answers were not related to the question):

The responders had prepared by:

- Having a plan in place and people ready to work with it. (3)
- Having a store of sandbags and flood wardens in place in advance (1)
- Working with riparian owners in advance of winter (1)
- Having flood defences in place following previous floods (2)
- Letting the community know, especially those at risk, as soon as issues started by leaflets, emails etc. (4)
- Having links with WBC. TW, EA and Lock Keepers. (3)

Where preparation was not so good:

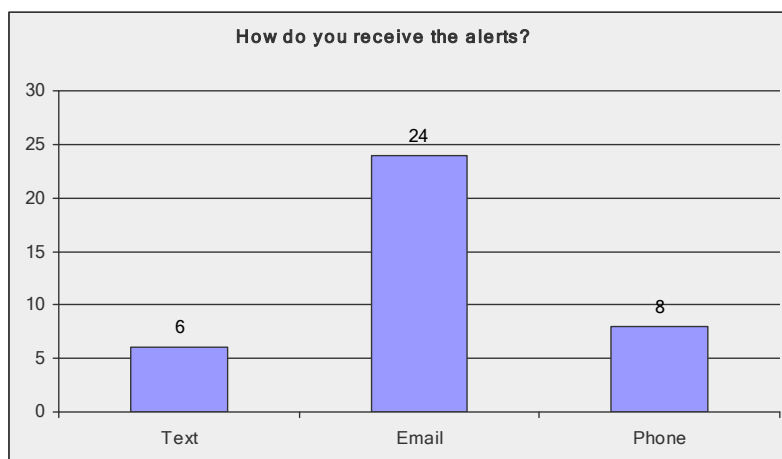
- Were not prepared for 4 months of sewage issues (1)
- Some residents expected everything to be done for them (1)
- Some businesses were not prepared (1)
- Some info from EA did not help the preparations (1)
- Some locations where flooded had not been flooded in the past so not ready (1)
- More resources necessary (3)
- Few individuals at risk at property level protection.(1)
- The community was slow to get off the mark (2)

10. Responders were asked a number of questions about specific preparations including:

- i. **If they were signed up to Floodline and if so in what format they received the alerts.**

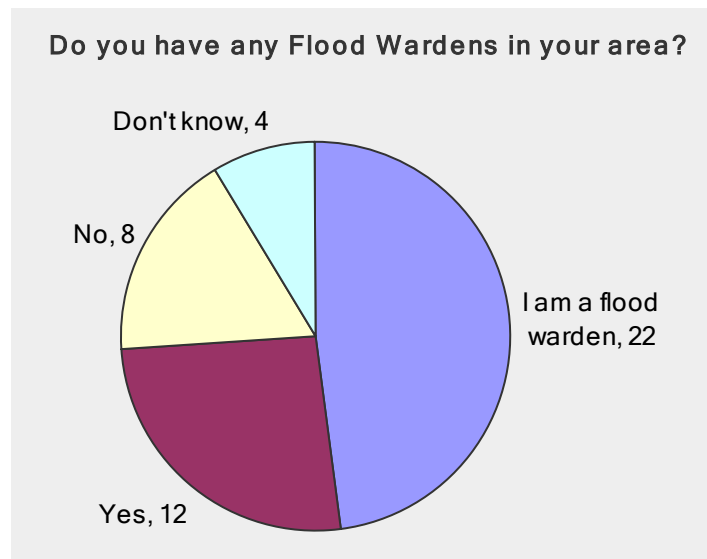


Of the 46 who answered the question, 29 were signed up to the Environment Agency free Floodline alerting system.



Of those signed up, 28 responded to say how they received the alerts. In comparison to residents and businesses who responded to separate surveys the majority (86%) received the alerts by email.

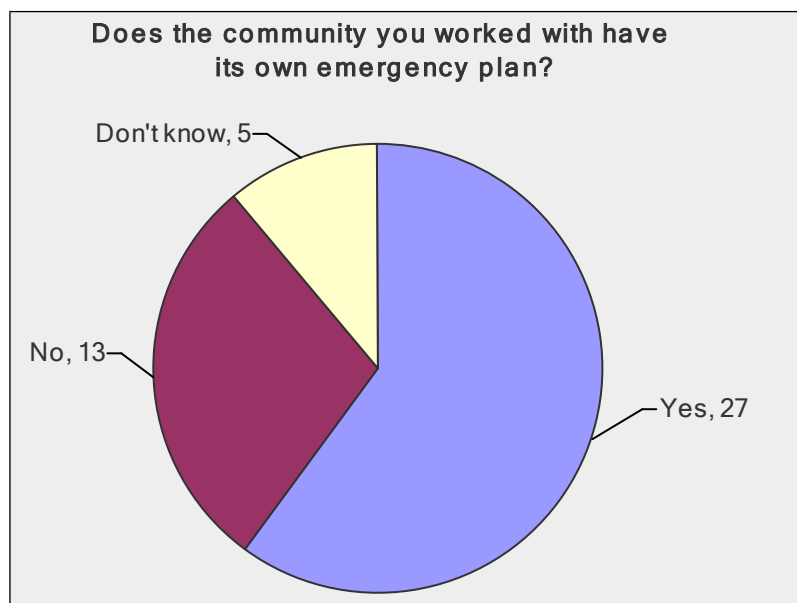
ii. **if they had any Flood Wardens in their area?**



45 responders answered this question. 26% said they had no flood wardens or didn't know if their community had any. This indicates that several of the responses were from the same communities because of the 30 Ward areas there are known to be 9 (43%) wards with Flood Wardens in some or all of the communities.

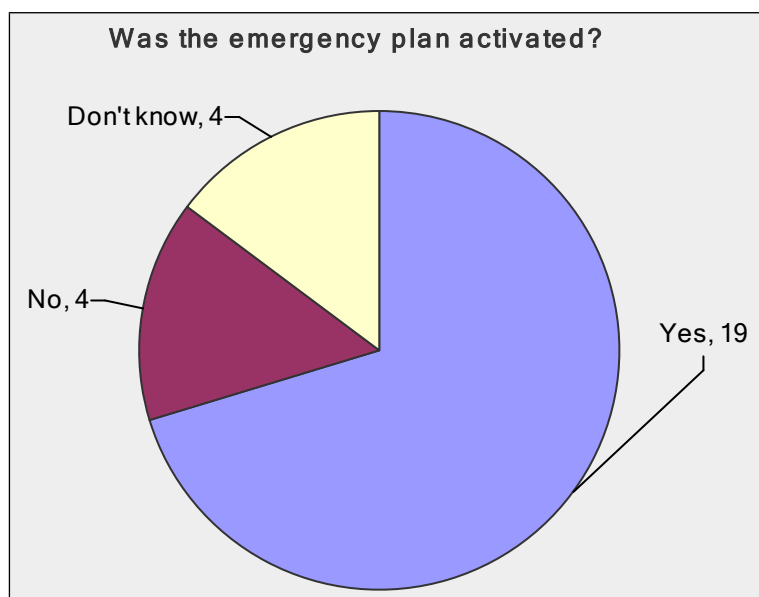
The above therefore also indicates where the flood wardens exist they are known about. However of the 30 wards, 19 of which are in known flood risk areas there are 57% altogether without any wardens and 52% of those wards where flooding is a specific risk.

iii. **If the community had its own emergency plan?**



45 responders answered the question. This also reflects that at least 40% of the Wards do not have Community Emergency Plans.

iv. **Whether the emergency plan activated?**



27 responded to the question which may be considered to be the same 27 that said there was a community plan in their area, however only 19 confirmed that their plan had been activated.

v. **Responders were asked about the effectiveness of their plans and any improvements?**

17 responded to the question. 3 advised their community plan was effective, whereas 14 said they were reviewing their plans. The areas of improvement suggested are set out below:

Inform the wider community about the plan
Inform the community most at risk what they need to do
Consider the coordination of a response when a long term event
Report into relevant agencies early re emerging issues
Make the plan more specific for some issues
Improve communications within the community
Expand the emergency team and flood wardens
Review resources stored locally e.g. sandbags, washboards, flood defences, pet cages & signs
Consider what work can be done in advance of actual flooding
Push for those at risk to sign up to Floodline
Include flash flood situation in the plan
Consider other issues - make it not just a flood plan e.g. phone, power failures

FW/Ward/T&PC's Key Points 6:

- The majority of responders believed their communities were reasonably well prepared in advance of the adverse weather. However some issues were considered that need to be improved in their community preparations.
- The use of Floodline by the responders to this survey was not high. Potentially because some of the responders are not at direct risk of flooding themselves.
- The method of receiving floodline alerts is concerning since alerts are put in place at anytime of the day or night therefore there is a risk that an alert or more particularly a flood warning where properties would be at risk of flooding would be missed
- From the feedback and data re where responders were from it is likely that some of the responders were from the same ward area and therefore the percentage of those wards & communities within the Ward areas without Community Emergency Plans is likely to be higher in reality.
- The activation of community plans was not high therefore begged the question if they had a plan why was it not activated. This was a gap in the questions
- Not all plans were activated, perhaps because they were not in a flood affected area, or because the plans were not clear.
- There are a significant number of flood wardens across the area of West Berkshire and this grew during the flooding.

How well did the communities know what was going on within the community and across West Berkshire and what did they do with the information?

11. Responders were asked how they found out what was happening in their community?

Answer Options	Face to face	Email	Website	Twitter	Facebook	Radio/TV	Publication
West Berkshire Council	18	43	12	2	1	2	1
West Berkshire District Councillor	13	12	1	0	0	0	0
Local Town/Parish Councillor	22	21	3	0	1	0	1
Flood warden	18	18	1	0	1	0	2
Community group	10	10	0	0	2	0	0
Environment Agency	11	18	12	1	0	2	1
Thames Water	6	7	4	0	0	0	1
Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE)	2	2	6	0	0	1	0
Local media	2	0	1	0	1	10	1
National media	1	0	1	0	0	8	1
	32%	42%	13%	1%	2%	7%	3%

45 people answered this question.

The table indicates that the most frequently used source of information was West Berkshire Council via email.

The next most frequently used source of information by those who answered the question was via Town & Parish Councillors and Flood Wardens, followed by Ward members, the Environment agency and local media.

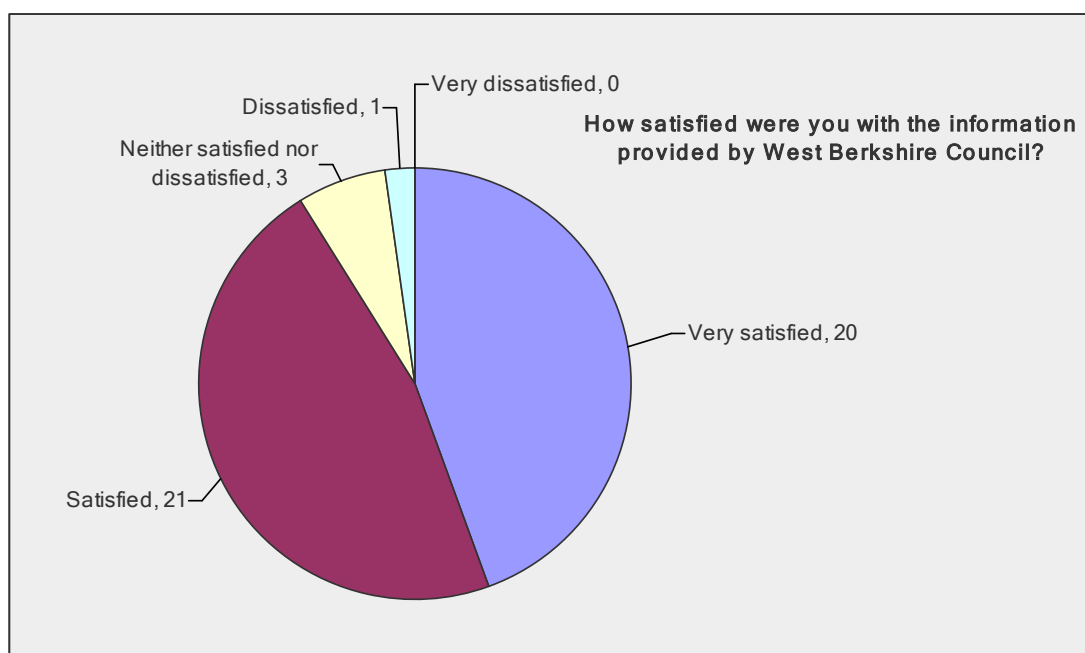
The most common route used to obtain information was via email followed by face to face.

Whilst websites were used, they were not used to the same extent as direct information. Similar to the residential and business survey however social media was not widely relied on.

On further analysis most of the information was received from West Berkshire Council with Local Town/Parish Councillors and Flood Wardens following thereafter as shown below.

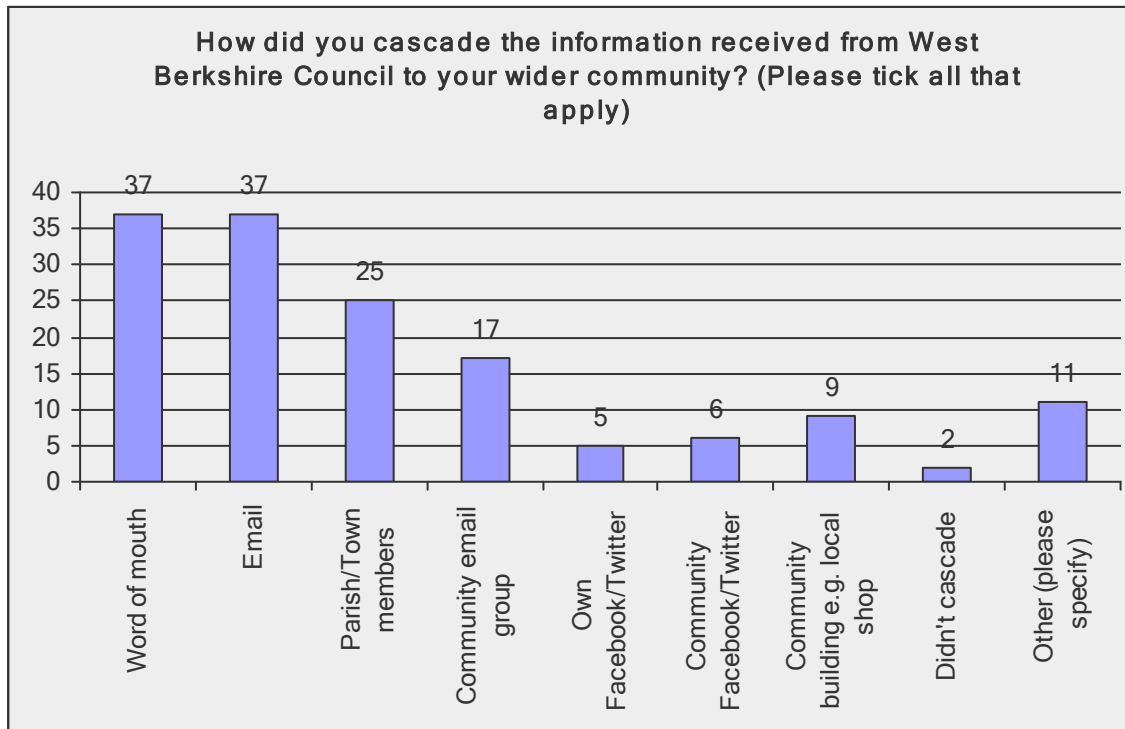
Source of Information to responders	% of total information
West Berkshire Council	26
Local Town/Parish Councillor	16
Flood warden	13
Environment Agency	12
West Berkshire District Councillor	9
Community group	7
Thames Water	6
Local media	5
Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE)	3
National media	3

12. Having regard to the information provided by West Berkshire Council responders were asked to **rate their satisfaction with this information?**



45 responders answered this question with the majority (91%) being satisfied or very satisfied with the information provided. There was one responder who was not satisfied and whilst a small number this suggests there are still improvements to be made.

13. Emails sent direct to Flood Wardens, Town and Parish Councillors and Ward Members were intended to be passed on in the community as appropriate, therefore responders were asked **how they cascaded the information received from West Berkshire Council the wider community?**



45 responders answered this question.

Results show the main communications routes were word of mouth, email and via other Parish Councillors. (66%)

There was a smaller group of responders using their own or community email groups (11%) with a further 7% using local community social media messaging routes. Therefore despite not being a major means of finding out information from West Berkshire Council social media directly, it was being used to report information locally.

6% were also posting the information on local shops/notice boards etc.

Other means of passing the information on in the community included:

- Leaflets (4)
- Posters (3)
- Street Letters (1)
- Door Knocking (1)
- Telephone (1)
- Meetings (1)

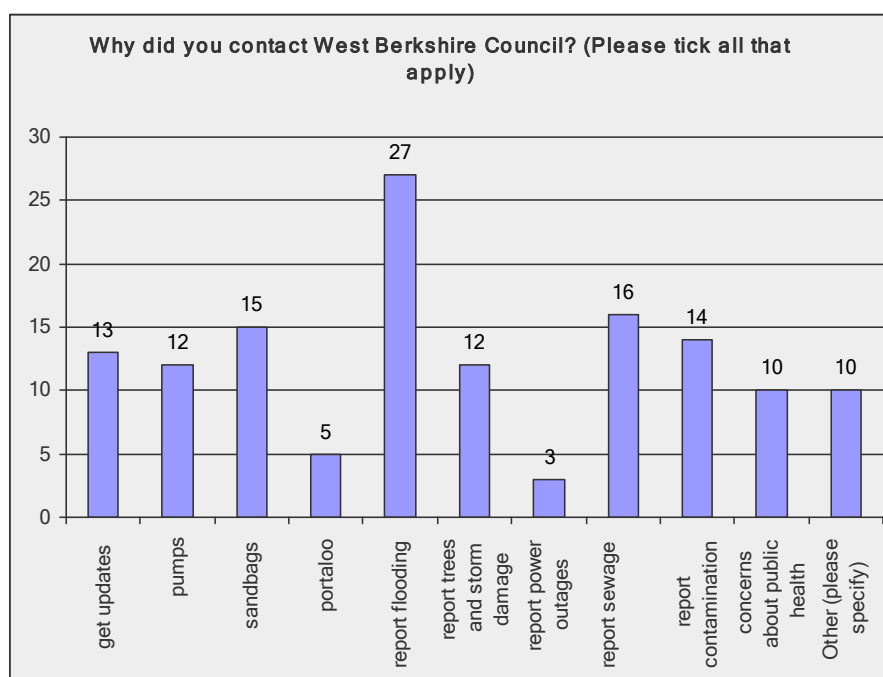
99% was reported as being cascaded to the community.

FW/Ward/T&PC's Key Points 7:

- West Berkshire Council was the main source of information (face to face/email/website etc) This response in part is likely to be due to the fact that throughout the whole period emails were sent to Flood Wardens, Parish Councils and Ward Members
- Communities including Flood Wardens are important routes for sharing information.
- Social Media was not used wide for sourcing information. However it was used for cascading information to the community.
- Most recipients of information from West Berkshire Council passed it on through their communities via a number of routes including community social media groups.
- The utility companies and national media were the least used sources of information.
- The satisfaction rate of the information passed to the responders from West Berkshire Council was very high.
- It is important to get messages out to as many recipients as possible therefore all routes need to be considers, including social media especially if this can be linked into local community social media groups.

14. Responders were asked if they contact West Berkshire Council directly and if so why and to rate their level of satisfaction?

34 out of 46 responders contacted the Council during the floods. Their reasons for contacting the Council were:



These calls can be split into a number of areas:

- To report flooding or storm damage. (28%)
- To request for resources by way of pumps, sandbags and portaloos (16%)
- To get updates (9%)
- To report issues which are not WBC responsibilities (power outage/sewage) – (19%)
- To report contamination and public health concerns (18%)

Other issues reported to the Council included:

- To request road closures (3)
- To request road to be opened(1)
- Report damage to road (1)
- Provide feedback and discuss specific actions (4)

The majority of contacts were relevant to the Councils' responsibilities with the exception of the supply of resources (unless for wider community benefit) and utilities issues. That said it was important to get the information directly from those leading in the communities so action could be taken.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Phoned customer services during the day	5	12	3	0	0
Phoned emergency contact centre out of hours	5	6	8	0	1
Phoned Emergency operations Centre	6	12	3	1	0
Email	10	7	2	0	0
Online reporting	2	4	4	0	0
Other	1	2	2	0	0

The majority of the 31 responders were satisfied or very satisfied (75%). However 2% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. These relate to one contact each to the EOC and the Out of Hours Contact Centre therefore statistically very low.

FW/Ward/T&PC's Key Points/Comments 8:

- There appeared to be a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Council when making contact than the residents' survey.
- The satisfaction with the customer service was very high.
- The Out of Hours Contact Centre had a lower satisfaction than other means of contact with the Council in the Residents survey and therefore needs to be reviewed

What would the responder to the survey do differently and what would they suggest the Council does differently in the future.

15. Responders were asked **what, if anything the Council could do differently the next time.**

Of the 45 who responded, 30 suggested that the Council could do things differently the next time.

The themes pulled from the responses include:

Suggested Improvement	No of Responders
Improve communications including website with accurate information	6
Maintenance of Ditches and Gulleys	5
Review Sandbag Policy	4
More Local Authority Liaison Officers in affected areas	4
More joint working with other agencies	4
Put pressure on Thames Water	3
Speed up the overall response	3
Resources – more pumps and portaloos	2
Put pressure on the Environment Agency	1
Have more flood engineers	1
Encourage more volunteers and train them	2
Clarify roles and responsibilities	1
Encourage Property Level Protection	1

FW/Ward/T&PC's Key Points 9:

- Some of the improvements may not be directly related to the Council e.g. maintenance of many ditches are the responsibility of the land owner and not necessarily the Council Pumps and portaloos are not necessarily the best option nor the responsibility of the Council.

16. Responders were asked **what, if anything they would do differently the next time**

Of the 46 responders, 33 people said they would do things differently the next time. These responses have been summarised below:

More preparation in advance by:

Working with flood forums, developing or reviewing plans, working with landowners & WBC about clearance of ditches, gulleys etc, encourage property level protection.
Reviewing local resources such as pumps, sandbags, camping toilets etc.

Community Engagement actions including:

Publishing the Community Emergency Plan, getting more volunteers; spare batteries for phones; ensuring they are prepared with logs and on a rota so not so exhausted.

Improve communications within the Community by:

Getting out into the community, find more suitable notice board points,

Improve Liaison with:

Communities up and down stream, other responding agencies and engage early to emerging issues.

FW/Ward/T&PC's Key Points 10:

- The responders have taken time to consider their own issues and communities to see how they can improve for the future which is positive.

17. Finally responders were given an opportunity to provide any other information not already covered. 23 points were made which are summarised below.

It is recognised that all events are different, but that we can learn from each event. 8 responders gave positive feedback as to how WBC responded, however 5 responders confirmed the need for action in some specific areas. There was also recognition of good community spirit and that flood wardens did a great job.

Some specific points raised included:

- The Environment Agency website was often out of date with the levels of?
- Thames Water response was not good to whom?
- Clear up especially of sandbags in some areas could have been quicker
- Still concerns about the health/infection issues with flooding.

Summary of Recommendations following review of the feedback:

- i. Communities wellbeing in the long term with regard to stress needs to be monitored
- ii. Keeping access routes open / considering ways to move people around safely in flooded areas without adding bow waves / allowing business to continue as much as possible should be reviewed.
- iii. Working with TVP regarding road closures, access to residents/businesses and enforcement to be reviewed.
- iv. Provision of support by way of liaison officers either in the communities directly (Major Incident Support Team) or a single point of contact to call (within limitations).
- v. The Communities Emergency Plan should be reviewed to ensure some of the good practice is shared with other communities.
- vi. More communities should be encouraged to build resilience and support those most vulnerable in the community.
- vii. Flood Wardens could be developed further and for other risks and not just flooding.
- viii. More Flood Wardens/Community Resilience Volunteers should be encouraged in all communities in order to share the load wider
- ix. Existing community plans should be reviewed with some of the lessons identified being considered in their own reviews.
- x. Communities should consider their communication opportunities in their community to ensure information is spread as far as possible.
- xi. Utility companies are recommended to review their communications to the community to increase their engagement.
- xii. Clarity could be provided at the start of emails to communities as to what is expected of the recipient
- xiii. The WBC Out of Hours Contact Centre service should be reviewed.
- xiv. The communications processes should be reviewed and improved including how it will operate effectively in emergencies to ensure up to date at all times including website,
- xv. A comms/Information management person in EOC to facilitate the above.
- xvi. The sandbag policy should be reviewed, amended as necessary and widely promoted as to what the Council will and will not do.
- xvii. Whilst there has been a lot of joint working with agencies across the Thames Valley more joint working at local level should be considered
- xviii. National support should be recommended to continue in relation to property level protection.
- xix. The Council should continue to work with all the Flood Forums to encourage good practice and support where possible with actions.

Appendix H Recommendations

Below are the recommendations extracted from this debrief process. Some recommendations have already been annotated where action is underway. Many recommendations have already started to be progressed, some may not be able to progress due to budget constraints whilst others may take some time to complete. The details of which will be provided at the first review of the progress made.

Source Key:

Main report and Surveys – refers to recommendations from the main report

OSMC – refers to recommendations from the OSMC review

OSMC+ - refers to recommendations which were highlighted following both of the above.

Ser	Source	Subject Area	Recommendation	Lead Agency/Service/ Team	Feedback on proposed recommendation incl any cost implications if known	Progress with action (assuming agreed)
1	Main report & Surveys	Business Continuity	All external contractors supporting services, in particular, critical or essential services should have their Business Continuity Management plans reviewed and actions taken as necessary. WBC Information Security Officer to review the plans to ensure they are fit for purpose.	WBC/ICT & Legal /Business Continuity & Contracts		
2	Main report & Surveys	Business Continuity	The Councils Corporate Business Continuity and Service Business Continuity plans should all be reviewed in order to ensure they are fit for purpose. WBC Information Security Officer to review the plans to ensure they are fit for purpose.	WBC/ICT/Business Continuity		
3	OSMC	Business Continuity	The Head of Highways and Transport should establish a register of recently retired or other local highways engineers willing to work with and for the Council during extended flood events. Assessment of their suitability	WBC/H&T		

Ser	Source	Subject Area	Recommendation	Lead Agency/Service/ Team	Feedback on proposed recommendation incl any cost implications if known	Progress with action (assuming agreed)
			to be included, or remain, on the register should be carried out.			
4	OSMC	Business Continuity	The Information Security Officer should closely monitor the effectiveness of the scheme (as in 3 above) and if, appropriate, consider its extension to other emergency incident competencies.	WBC/ICT/Business Continuity		
5	OSMC+	Business Continuity	Through the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum, the Civil Contingencies Manager should reinforce the necessity to activate Business Continuity Plans when dealing with major incidents, particularly when they are of a prolonged duration, and that it is fully understood by senior managers within Category 1 organisations. This should include the requirement to provide representation to Tactical Co-ordination Groups.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		
6	Main report & Surveys	Businesses	A more detailed wider survey and/or assessment of local businesses readiness is recommended in order to determine what their state of readiness is and any support businesses need to improve their resilience, esp. SME's.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies	This is being reviewed across Berkshire as a project for 2015/16. Thus allowing more evidence to be gathered and thereafter more targeted support/guidance provided. Cost implications will be shared across Berkshire.	Draft survey has been developed and being tested internally. Initial Berkshire planning meeting programmed for Mar 15.

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7	OSMC+	Communications	<p>The Head of Strategic Support should develop and implement a flood communication strategy to ensure that the right information is delivered to the right people at the right time. It should include elements to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The provision of information to residents and businesses on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Whether their property is in a flood zone and the specific risks that they face ➤ Their roles in protecting their own premises before flooding occurs and examples of permanent and temporary measures that the public can take to protect their property ➤ The roles and responsibilities of flood risk agencies and the help and advice they can expect from agencies during incidents ➤ The causes of flooding and level of flood risk ➤ The responsibilities of riparian owners ➤ Flood incident health and safety ➤ The Council's culvert policy ➤ The limitations of sandbags as a flood defence measure) ➤ Health and safety risks associated with surface water, river and sewer flooding. ○ The communications channels (e.g. emails, face to face, websites, 'flood bus', text, social and broadcast media etc) to be 	WBC/Strategic Support/Communications & Civil Contingencies	<p>A TV LRF comms & media strategy review is underway.</p> <p>The WBC review and strategy should integrate with the TV LRF process to complement it.</p>	

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			<p>used during flooding incidents and how they might be exploited to best effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How best to work with other agencies to develop triggers and activation processes for the establishment of communications cells within the multi-agency Tactical Co-ordination Centre ○ The joining-up of agencies' telephony and internet channels to provide a single point of contact for residents that gives the information and they need, regardless of provider. ○ The triggers and activation processes for the establishment of communications cells within the Emergency Operations Centre. 			
8	Main report & Surveys	Communications	<p>The Communications strategy should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Operation of 24/7 cover and ability to operate all communication options. ○ details of support by way of mutual aid 	WBC/Strategic Support/Communications		
9	OSMC+	Communications	<p>The Head of Highways and Transport should explore the opportunities for the use of appropriate technologies, such as mobile phone applications or satellite navigation systems, for the dissemination of real-time road closure alerts. A report on the available options should be returned to the OSMC by June 2015.</p>	WBC/H&T		

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10	OSMC	Communications	The Executive Member for Civil Contingencies should ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to consider the establishment of a single point of contact for the public when reporting all types of flooding or other resilience incidents (like those services provided by 101 or 111) from where calls can then be directed to the appropriate agency.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		
11	OSMC+	Communications	The Head of Highways and Transport, through the West Berkshire Professional Partners Flooding Group, should ensure that communities are regularly updated on the progress of ongoing flood prevention and alleviation work being undertaken by all agencies in their areas.	WBC/H&T	Quarterly meetings are taking place with up to 5 flood forums. A Flood newsletter is also being provided to all Parishes and Flood Wardens periodically. Direct contact is being made with communities when WBC investigations and work is underway.	
12	Main report & Surveys	Communications	The WBC Out of Hours Contact Centre service should be reviewed in relation to emergencies.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies	The contract is being retendered in 2014/15. The response and processes in emergencies is being revised in tender documents.	Deadline of 1 Apr 2015.
13	Main report & Surveys	Community Resilience	The Civil Contingencies Manager should review the Community Template plan to include information and guidance.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies & Communities	This action is also being reviewed across the Thames Valley.	The template plan is under review with a view to being released in Dec 14.

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14	Main report & Surveys	Community Resilience	Promotion of property level protection where possible should be undertaken for properties at risk of flooding to prepare them by the installation.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies & Environment Agency	The action is supported.	Progress being made via: Flood Forums Communications with the Flood Wardens (telecom on 10 Dec and via newsletters & website) National Flood Forum being invited to a flood prevention/resilience event in 2015.
15	OSMC	Community Resilience	Parish Councils in known flood-risk areas should consider the purchase of pumps and other emergency flood alleviation equipment for use in their own communities. Progress should be measured and monitored.	Parish Councils		
16	OSMC+	Community Resilience	The Head of Strategic Support should incorporate the consideration of emergency planning into the Parish Planning process, particularly for those communities whose areas are likely to benefit from the establishment of a local flood forum.	WBC/Strategic Support	This is already in the programme for Parish Planning. It is being refreshed in 2015.	
17	OSMC+	Community Resilience	The Civil Contingencies Manager should encourage all town and parish councils to annually review their preparedness for flooding/winter.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		Reminders sent out in Dec 14.

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18	OSMC+	Community Resilience	The Civil Contingencies Manager and the Environment Agency should integrate and co-ordinate the work of their respective flood wardens and flood ambassadors to ensure they achieve the best effect.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies AND Environment Agency	This is also in the TV LRF action plan following the floods.	The EA will endeavour to inform the LRF on the locations to where ambassadors have been/will be sent, daily in order that the links can be set up via WBC and the community flood wardens.
19	OSMC	Community Resilience	The Head of Highways and Transport should consider providing Neighbourhood Wardens with the keys to highways drains manhole covers for use during flooding incidents.	WBC/H&T		
20	Main report & Surveys	Community Resilience	The Council should continue to work with all the Flood Forums.	WBC/H&T & Strategic Support		This is progressing well with attendance at all meetings.
21	OSMC+	Community Resilience	The Environment Agency should take steps to increase the number of West Berkshire residents and businesses in flood risk areas signed up to its Floodline alerting system.	Environment Agency		4304 props at fluvial risk in WBC area of which 2562 are registered. Registered numbers are down as people cancel landline contracts. EA are looking at ways to increase registration by extending opt out service to other mobile providers. No timescales yet.
22	OSMC+	Community Resilience	The Environment Agency, working with the Council's Civil Contingencies Manager, should develop and deliver a package of training (including through the use of videos) for all	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies & Environment Agency		There is a lot of information already on the gov.uk website on what actions to take to reduce the impact of flooding Training by way of support by

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			agencies and for the public on how, when and where to build effective sandbag defences.			Field Team's are also available.
23	Main report & Surveys	EOC	The Civil Contingencies Manager should review the processes in the EOC following staff feedback.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		This process is underway including scoping costs.
24	Main report & Surveys	EOC	The Civil Contingencies Manager should review relation to staffing and competencies	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		This process is underway but will not be concluded until 2015/16.
25	OSMC	Gov't	The Civil Contingencies Manager should request that the Government (via the Department for Communities and Local Government) works with the Association of British Insurers to identify measures that might discourage the drivers of vehicles from contravening formal road closures. This might include the passing back to policy holders the costs of recovering the occupants of vehicles, recovering the vehicle itself, the damage to third parties (for example householders) and the making good of damage to their vehicles.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		
26	Main report & Surveys	Health	Public Health England should prepare in advance clearer advice and information in relation to flood waters to cover rural locations, open rivers and potential contamination with raw sewage	PHE		

Ser	Source	Subject Area	Recommendation	Lead Agency/Service/ Team	Feedback on proposed recommendation incl any cost implications if known	Progress with action (assuming agreed)
27	OSMC+	Information Sharing	The Civil Contingencies Manager should specify, select, procure (if necessary) and deliver an Information Management System (IMS) for the Council's Emergency Operations Centre that allows for effective and efficient logging, tracking and dissemination of information relating to emergency incidents. If feasible, the system should allow for alerts to be communicated to subscribers to the Environment Agency's Floodline notification system and, for road closures, to motorists.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies	A number of options will be investigated. It is likely to be expensive and therefore either capital bids will be necessary and/or joint working with other responders to prepare for a joint IMS process across all responders.	
28	OSMC+	Information Sharing	The Civil Contingencies Manager should revise the West Berkshire Vulnerable People Plan to incorporate a process for sharing and collation of information from and between agencies.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies	The TV LRF plan is also being reviewed.	
29	Main report & Surveys	Members	A 'duty' Member arrangement should be considered by all political parties and put in place in the Major Incident Plan/Members Handbook	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		
30	OSMC+	MIST	The Civil Contingencies Manager should work to establish a Major Incident Support Team (MIST), comprising individuals available to be deployed to affected communities.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies	Agreed that this should be established.	A number of meetings have taken place to scope the ToR's of such a group, the 'type' of person/JD necessary with a view to developing a training programme across the Council.

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31	Main report & Surveys	MoD	<p>It is recommended that the Civil Contingencies Manager liaise with the Military in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The process of activation of MOD assets -Consideration should be given to military units being coterminous boundaries with the LA's they are supporting. '-Adoption' of specific local units -Joint training with these local units to facilitate joint working and understanding 	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		The points have been raised with the Joint Regional Liaison Officer. Responses pending.
32	OSMC	Other	<p>The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission should commission a strategic review of the implications of climate change on the Council and other agencies. The scope of the review should be sufficiently wide to evaluate the impact of climate change on business as usual activities as well as preparedness for severe weather incidents.</p>	OSMC		
33	OSMC	Other	<p>The Head of Highways and Transport, working with other agencies, should ensure that the temporary flood alleviation measures that are still in place remain fit for purpose, are made permanent or removed as appropriate.</p>	WBC/H&T		

Ser	Source	Subject Area	Recommendation	Lead Agency/Service/ Team	Feedback on proposed recommendation incl any cost implications if known	Progress with action (assuming agreed)
34	OSMC+	Plan	The Civil Contingencies Manager should review the Major Incident Plan in relation to: Declaring a Major Incident should be considered using the definition and considering the support likely to be required	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies	Supported	This action will be processed in 2015.
35	OSMC	Plan	The Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum should consider the inclusion of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) as participants in the Tactical Co-ordination Group when necessary.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		
36	OSMC+	Plan	The Civil Contingencies Manager should consider the inclusion of Registered Social Landlords as participants in the Emergency Operations Centre when necessary.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies	Supported	This will be reviewed and updated in the EOC plans, NB not all RSLs would be able to be involved due to numbers.
37	OSMC	Plan	The Head of Education should work to achieve 100% adoption of Major Incident Plans within schools. Head teachers should be encouraged to share their plans with children in order that the arrangements contained within them are widely known.	WBC/Education		
38	OSMC+	Plan	The Civil Contingencies Manager should develop and appropriately resource a plan for the activation of a Tactical Co-ordination Group in the Council offices.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies	Supported	
39	OSMC+	Plan	The Head of Highways and Transport, working with the Civil Contingencies Manager, should develop and	WBC/H&T & Strategic Support		

Ser	Source	Subject Area	Recommendation	Lead Agency/Service/ Team	Feedback on proposed recommendation incl any cost implications if known	Progress with action (assuming agreed)
			maintain a local critical infrastructure map.			
40	OSMC+	Plan	The Head of Highways and Transport should develop the local flood plan to: - Reflect risk and identify where strategic flood protection and response assets might be located. - Identify private land on to which flood water might be diverted to protect homes or businesses from damage	WBC/H&T		
41	OSMC	Plan	The Environment Agency should work with land owners and other agencies to develop a plan for the management of locks and weirs in the event of flooding incidents.	Environment Agency	Supported	The EA have acknowledged this and have submitted a project mandate to carry out modelling on the River Kennet to develop an operational plan for asset along the watercourse. Confirmation of funding should be detailed by March 2015. Note if the funding is not secured this project will not be taken forward.
42	OSMC	Plan	All Registered Social Landlords should be advised to consider the requirement for property level protection in their housing stocks. A report on the feasibility of works should be returned to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission by June 2015.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies	Supported in that the CC team and H&T will contact all RSL's in the area requesting them to confirm properties in flood risk areas and what they have done or will do to protect them.	

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43	OSMC+	Policy	The Head of Highways should review the operation of the Council's Sandbag Policy to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. A report setting out the policy should be returned to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission by June 2015.	WBC/H&T		
44	OSMC+	Community Resilience	The Civil Contingencies Manager should conduct annually an assessment of flooding readiness prior to the onset of winter.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies	Supported	This audit was undertaken in Nov 14 with an wider agency audit undertaken in Dec 14.
45	OSMC	Preventative	The Environment Agency, along with other responsible agencies (e.g. the Canal and River Trust), should review its dredging and river maintenance including weed management) policies, to ensure that they are fit for all purposes and that the works are carried in all locations where there would be benefit. Riparian owners should be supported or have enforcement action taken against them as necessary. A report setting out the Agency's position should be returned to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission by June 2015.	Environment Agency		The EA produce and deliver an annual maintenance programme in areas where this work can provide the greatest reduction in flood risk. The EA work hard to make sure they continue to spend taxpayers' money where it delivers the greatest flood risk benefit. Each year the EA publish this maintenance programme and consult with our key partners on this. However, it is acknowledged there maybe work to do with other interest parties to reach an overall catchment approach to maintenance. Please note the EA cannot guarantee funding each year to deliver watercourse maintenance.

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						The work is undertaking using their permissive powers. The EA are happy to support and advise riparian owners. They will only undertake enforcement action where there is a clear obstruction of the channel that is causing problems, such as increasing flood risk.
46	OSMC	Recovery	Through the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum, the Civil Contingencies Manager should work with all agencies to ensure that their roles in recovery, as well as response, are fully understood and delivered against.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies	Supported	The TV LRF Recovery plan is being revised by end Mar 2015 and will include this is covered. A training programme is also being developed
47	OSMC	Resources	Through the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum, the Civil Contingencies Manager should seek the establishment of a Strategic Resilience Resource Store at an appropriate location or locations to hold essential flood alleviation equipment, including personal protective equipment. This should be supported by plans for its ongoing maintenance and resourcing, as well as activation, staffing and de-activation during and after incidents.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		

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48	OSMC	Resources	The Civil Contingencies Manager should establish and maintain a register of local providers able to provide assets that might be mobilised in the event of an emergency. The required items might include large goods and 4 x 4 vehicles (including those with snorkels), pumps and personal protective equipment.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		
49	OSMC+	Resources	The Head of Highways and Transport should create an adequate stock of 'road closure', 'flood' and 'foul water' signs for deployment during flood incidents.	WBC/H&T		
50	OSMC+	Resources	The Civil Contingencies Manager should obtain clarification from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on the responsibility for the provision of portable toilets during events that involve sewage water flooding.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		
51	OSMC	Resources	The Civil Contingencies Manager should investigate the utility of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in the response to flooding and other emergency incidents. A report setting out the findings should be returned to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission by June 2015.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		

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52	OMSC+	Roads	The Head of Highways and Transport should examine the possibility of other Council staff or other people, for example Neighbourhood Wardens, assisting police officers in the enforcement of road closures.	WBC/H&T		
53	OSMC	Roads	If preventative measures cannot be applied to known flood prone roads (in order to keep them open) then the Head of Highways and Transport should assess the feasibility of providing permanent gates or barriers, including on fords. A report setting out the findings should be returned to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission by June 2015.	WBC/H&T		
54	OSMC	Specific	Thames Water, working with Network Rail, should expedite the work to address the flooding of Newbury railway station.	Thames Water		
55	OSMC	Specific	The Head of Highways and Transport should conduct surveys, including by CCTV, of all critical drainage infrastructure located within the Highways to ensure they are free from obstacles, debris and damage.	WBC/H&T		
56	OSMC	Specific	The Head of Highways and Transport should develop and deliver a programme of works to fit and maintain non-return valves on highway drains that empty into rivers	WBC/H&T		

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			in areas where ingress from water-sources is known to be an issue.			
57	OSMC	Training	Through the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum, the Civil Contingencies Manager should seek the provision of the training necessary to ensure that key Category 1 decision-makers have the confidence to declare a 'major incident' or to request mutual aid when and if necessary.	WBC/Strategic Support/Civil Contingencies		
58	OSMC	Training	The Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service should develop and deliver a multi-agency water and flood safety training programme.	RBFRS		
59	OSMC	Utilities	Thames Water should urgently ensure that the waste water network is protected from ground and surface water ingress. Thames Water should provide its capital programme for West Berkshire to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management by June 2015.	Thames Water		
60	Main report & Surveys	Utilities	Utility companies are recommended to review their communications to the community including the robustness of their systems and staffing levels.	Utilities		

