



FLOODING ON THE RISE

By necessity, most RYA clubs and associations are near water – be it rivers, estuaries, lakes or the sea. Flooding may even come from unexpected sources, as surface run-off, groundwater, or leaks from pipes. We want you to understand the risk you are at from flooding, how that risk may be changing, and what you can do to reduce the impact it may have. We are seeing an increase in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, so the risk of flooding is increasing.

The RYA strongly recommends you:

- Above all, take all precautions necessary to avoid risk to life.
- Make a [Flood Plan](#) and nominate Responsible Members for maintaining and updating this.
- Register for flood warnings, where relevant, from your local flood authority¹.
- Be familiar with the online flood risk maps produced by the [Environment Agency](#) (England and Wales), [SEPA](#) (Scotland) or [DfI](#) (Northern Ireland).
- Check whether your insurance covers flood damage, and to what extent.

Almost every sailing club should have a flood plan that details the preparations for flood resilience, preparations and warnings of when a flood is **expected**, procedures **during** flood events and procedures **after** flood events. These may differ depending on the type of flooding that is experienced.

The safety of people during a flood event is critical. Every year deaths occur as people are swept away, trapped or overwhelmed by flood water. Other risks may also be posed by electricity, damage to structures, and contaminated water. You must ensure that your plan looks after the safety of your members and the general public. Above all, you should stay away from floods as they happen. Flooding cannot be stopped, but it is possible to minimise the consequences, and with some proper planning, start to increase your resilience to these events.

TYPES OF FLOODING

There are six types of flooding which could affect you, your Club/Association and your equipment and facilities. The likelihood of each depends on your location and the geography of the landscape where you operate.

<p>Coastal Flooding can occur when there are high tides and stormy conditions. If low atmospheric pressure coincides with a high tide, or series of high tides, a tidal surge (a 'bulge' of water often directionally driven by strong winds), may overtop defences.</p>	
<p>River flooding happens when a watercourse cannot cope with the water draining into it from surrounding land, particularly when ground is already waterlogged.</p>	 <p>FLOOD ALERT</p>
<p>Surface water flooding occurs when rainwater does not drain away through the normal drainage system, or soak into the ground. This flooding can be hard to predict in terms of intensity and location.</p>	 <p>FLOOD WARNING</p>
<p>Sewer flooding can be caused by debris blockages and sewers overwhelmed by heavy rain, and can lead to property and land contamination by raw sewage. The chance of flooding depends on the amount of rain and the capacity of the local sewerage system.</p>	 <p>SEVERE FLOOD WARNING</p>
<p>Reservoir flooding is possible through a dam failure, although the UK safety record is excellent.</p>	
<p>Groundwater flooding is most likely to happen in areas where the landscape contains aquifers – permeable rocks that water can soak into or pass through.</p>	

By understanding better the risks from [flooding](#), RYA Clubs and Associations working on their own, and as part of their local community, can make a significant 'bottom-up' input in terms of mitigation of risk. The [National Flood Forum](#), a charity that is dedicated to representing people living in areas at risk from flooding, has produced the [blue pages](#), an independent directory of flood protection products.

PREPARING FOR FLOODING

<p>Make a Flood Plan and nominate Responsible Members for maintaining and updating this.</p>
<p>Sign up for automated/online flood warnings produced by the Environment Agency (England and Wales) and SEPA (Scotland), and monitor flood warning maps for England, Wales, and Scotland.</p>
<p>Take practical steps to prevent water seeping into property and causing damage.</p>
<p>Be familiar with the online flood risk and planning maps produced by the Environment Agency (England), NRW (Wales), SEPA (Scotland) or DfI (Northern Ireland).</p>
<p>Be familiar with web-based advice portals covering your locality and check regularly for updates.</p>
<p>If your club and premises are at risk for other sources of flooding e.g. tidal flooding, register to get weather warnings e-mailed to you from the Met Office.</p>
<p>Check whether your insurance covers flood damage, and to what extent.</p>
<p>Join your local flood or coastal action group.</p>

Take part if your local community is consulted on local plans or flood alleviation schemes.
Seek opportunities to become involved in initiatives to protect your local community from flooding or adapt better to coastal change.
Monitor erosion and accretion of sediment / shifting of sand bars / narrowing of watercourses in the vicinity of your club.
Monitor woody debris accumulations as, if mobilised during a flood, these can cause significant hazard to your facilities and equipment during extreme events.
Keep drains and culverts in the vicinity of club property free of wood and debris. In some cases it is a statutory duty of the landowner to maintain culverts on or under their property.
Get in the habit of regularly checking the levels of local rivers online .
Boats and equipment in boathouses will float around if the property is flooded; have systems in place to rapidly and effectively secure mobile items.
Use measures to prevent flood-water getting in, and limit the damage, but be aware that you may need permission for some works.

DURING A FLOOD

Above all, take all precautions to avoid risk to life.
Stay away from water and affected Club property where at all possible.
Check the requirements of your flood insurer.
Where a flood warning has been received, there may be time for some key actions that need to be taken to minimise risk and the impact of the flooding. However, be very careful and ensure that safety is your primary concern.
Put sand bags and flood protection devices in place.
Wear lifejackets in the vicinity of water at all times.
If time permits, move essential items either upstairs or to a high place.
Turn off gas and electricity supplies when water is about to enter your property, but only if it is completely safe to do so.
If possible, and safe, take photographs to record the condition of any facilities at risk.
Keep listening to local radio or use your local Environment Agency or SEPA flood warnings service for up-to-date flood information.
Do not be tempted to offer boats to First Responders. If they need assistance they will approach you.

AFTER A FLOOD

Stay away from water-side property until the authorities have advised that it is safe to return.

Many [hazards](#) will remain after the flood waters have gone. These include unstable structures and contents, raised manhole covers, contaminated surfaces, as well as the potential for electrocution.

Above all, take all precautions to avoid risk to life and to avoid infection of any club member.

If the mains electricity was not switched off before the property was flooded, do not re-enter the property until a qualified electrician has determined it is safe to do so.

Contact your insurer as soon as possible if club property has been damaged. Most insurers have a 24 hour helpline.

Take lots of photos and videos.

If marinas and open water areas in the vicinity of the club are affected by [woody debris](#) accumulation, secure as much as you can to avoid it floating around and causing damage to craft in the vicinity. Only do this if it is safe to do so.

RECOVERY FROM A FLOOD

Grants may be available to aid recovery after severe flooding events. Information can be found through the [Flood Guidance website](#) and the [National Flood Forum](#).

Grants must be used only for improvements to the fabric of the premises that would reduce the impact and cost of subsequent flooding on the property, and for costs over and above repairs that would normally be covered by insurance.

Grants are not intended to cover standard repairs or to provide compensation. Normal property repairs to reinstate damage on a like-for-like basis should be covered by insurance, and are not eligible to receive a grant.

There are distinct advantages in having a [flood plan](#), in that planning ahead makes it easier to get grants for flood relief and resilience works.

FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PLANS

Flood risk management planning is an important part of a collaborative and integrated approach to catchment planning for water. Published in March 2016, first cycle Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs), developed jointly by Risk Management Authorities describe the risk of flooding from rivers, the sea, surface water, groundwater and reservoirs at a river basin and a catchment scale. The separate FRMPs for [England](#), [Wales](#) and [Scotland](#) set out how Risk Management Authorities will work together, and with communities, to manage flood and coastal risk between 2015 and 2021. This includes measures and actions to manage the risk and improve resilience.