

Somerset Levels and Moors Update – January 11th 2024

Overview

Last week, Storm Henk caused significant flooding across Wessex, including in Shepton Mallet, Croscombe, and Frome, as well as Bath, Dorset and Wiltshire. With heavy rain falling on saturated ground, some watercourses reached their highest ever recorded levels. Since then, the sustained dry weather has seen levels in rivers and on the moors drop considerably. Staff continue to be out on the ground in affected areas, recording impacts and offering advice and support.

We would encourage anyone affected by property flooding to report this on the [Flood Online Reporting Tool](#). We are working closely with our partners at Somerset Council to gather data about how many properties have been affected by flooding. This information is crucial not only for incident response, but for long term planning of flood risk reduction measures. The eligibility for public funds, both for flood schemes and for householder support such as the [Flood Recovery Framework](#), is determined in large part by the recorded number of flooded properties.

We know that as well as the economic and physical impacts, flooding can have a serious effect on emotional wellbeing. Please see the links at the end for information about recovery from flooding.

Current situation

The situation on the Somerset Moors is an ever improving one, and flood risk is decreasing daily thanks to the continued settled weather and our ongoing pumping operations.

Athelney spillway has stopped running and water has receded in this area, allowing Somerset Council to reopen the A361. At the time of writing, the Council's [emergency road closure gates](#) remain closed at Cutts Road, New Road and Langport Road.

In Somerset, one flood warning for [Curry Moor and Hay Moor](#) and [four flood alerts](#) remain in place.

Axe / Brue Catchment

Pumping stations are operating whenever they can, as high tides allow. There is a lot of water on low lying fields, which is taking time to work through the network of rhyes and watercourses to the pumping stations. Levels are steadily dropping across the moors.

In all areas of the Somerset Levels and Moors, landowners can help speed the evacuation of water by ensuring that their rhyes, culverts and ditches are clear of obstructions. For more information on riparian rights and responsibilities see [Owning a Watercourse](#).

Parrett / Tone Catchment – Upstream of Langport

All pumping stations are operating to clear as much water as possible from all the moors during this settled spell.

There are still large areas with considerable volumes of water on the ground, most notably West Sedgemoor and the moors around Muchelney and Thorney. While levels are dropping, most areas

will continue to see high levels for another week or two yet, and the worst affected moors will take longer than this to be pumped clear.

Monksleaze Clyce is operating within normal protocols.

Parrett / Tone Catchment – Downstream of Langport

All spillways have stopped running, and pumping is taking place at all stations. Temporary pumps remain in place at Currymoor, Saltmoor and Northmoor. There is still a considerable amount of water in Currymoor and Haymoor. All permanent and temporary pumps are operational at Currymoor, and we have staff monitoring operations 24hrs a day at Saltmoor pumping station, switching the temporary pumps on whenever there is enough water in the drains to do so. The water level in the drain at Northmoor pumping station is down to the desired winter level, and has remained within the capacity of the permanent pumps throughout.

It is taking time for the standing water on the fields to soak away through the soil or work through watercourses to pumping stations. We would encourage landowners to check their rhynes, culverts and ditches for obstructions.

Outlook

Dry weather looks set to continue for the next 5 days, with the potential for the return of wet weather from mid-week next week.

Flooding advice and information

Our advice to the public is to stay safe and not enter floodwater – just 30 cm of fast flowing water can move a car, and just 15 cm of fast flowing water could be enough to knock you off your feet.

What to do to prepare for flooding

- Call Floodline on 0345 988 1188 for updates on flooding, to sign up for flood warnings, or to report flooding.
- Go to www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding or search 'know my flood risk' to sign up for Environment Agency flood warnings, receive information on the risk in your area and what to do in a flood.
- Sign up for flood warnings at www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings
- Follow us on social media: www.facebook.com/environmentagencywessex
www.twitter.com/EnvAgencySW
Or visit: www.somersetiversauthority.org.uk

What to do during a flood

- Stay up-to-date on weather information and warnings: <https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/plan-ahead-for-flooding>
- Report current flooding to the Environment Agency Incident Hotline 0800 80 70 60 (main rivers or sea), Somerset Council 0300 123 2224 (ordinary watercourses) or Wessex Water (sewers) 0345 600 4600
- Get information on what to do during a flood from: www.gov.uk/help-during-flood
<http://www.somersetprepared.org.uk/hazard-advice/flooding>
www.somersetiversauthority.org.uk/useful-info
- **Call 999 if there is a risk to life**
- Remember: Always stay safe. In an immediate flood emergency or where there is a risk to life, follow the advice of the emergency services.

Recovery from Flooding

- For information on recovering from flooding, see: [How to recover from flooding - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk); or: <https://floodmary.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/homeowners-guide-to-flood-recovery.pdf>
- Somerset Council may be able to support with housing and welfare issues <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/beaches-ports-and-flooding/flooding-information-and-advice/>
- Submit a detailed property flooding report at <https://swim.geowessex.com/somerset>
- Flooding is very distressing, and it is common for people's emotional health to be impacted. Somerset Talking Therapies may be able to offer help: <https://www.somersetft.nhs.uk/somerset-talking-therapies/>

For all enquiries, or if you would like to be added to the distribution list for Somerset Levels and Moors updates, please email WessexEnquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk