

BOURTON PARISH COUNCIL
FLOOD WARDEN – JOB DESCRIPTION
(Adopted 16th December 2004)
(Reviewed April 2019)

1. Introduction

The Flood Warden scheme is an initiative of the Environment Agency. Its objective is to involve Parish and Town Councils and through them the local community, in all aspects of local flood defence and particularly with the two-way flow of information on the subject. The Flood Warden is appointed by the Parish or Town Council. It is a volunteer post with no fixed hours and may involve activity during weekends or at night. With the approval of the Council, the Flood Warden may recruit assistants having special knowledge or abilities.

The Environment Agency acts as co-ordinators of the flood wardens, advising and supplying them with information to assist them during times of flooding. Flood wardens are a first point of contact for residents during a flood event and are also there to give advice and information during dry periods.

Flood wardens are also the local response co-ordinators during times of flooding and are a conduit for dispensing information from the Environment Agency and emergency services to local residents, and vice-versa. A key part of this role is the production of the parish flood plan which outlines what parishes are to do in the event of a flood. Flood wardens are encouraged to set-up an information cascade system, possibly using deputy wardens, to disseminate information throughout a parish more easily.

It is important to note that flood wardens complement the emergency services, not replace them. The efforts they make can prove vital in helping a community cope with a flood event but they do not replace the trained emergency services. The warden can be seen as offering “flood first aid” They should not place themselves or others in danger.

Flood wardens are instigators of the flood plan during a flood event and may, for example, arrange the placement of sandbags, flood boards and warning signs. Wardens deal with different problems depending on their area. As well as groundwater and river flooding, local issues such as blocked drains, culverts and flooded roads can be dealt with.

Another important role of the flood wardens is to monitor watercourses within the community, and to advise the Environment Agency should any potential flooding hazards arise (e.g. blockages).

2. Flood Warden Qualities.

The qualities sought by the Parish Council require the Flood Warden to be:

- Reasonably fit and able to notify neighbours
- At home during the day or working close to home
- A good communicator - able to explain and pass on information
- Interested in the local area and the river environment
- Ideally not at a high risk of flooding themselves

3. Flood Warden Duties

The Flood Warden shall:

- a) familiarise himself with the various bodies which may become involved in a flooding incident and their individual responsibilities
- b) familiarise himself with the potential flood risks in the village and those people and properties which may be at risk
- c) in co-ordination with the Parish Council, take a leading role in the creation and subsequent maintenance/update of the local Flood Plan
- d) Attend seminars and training days organised by the Environment Agency. Travel expenses will be paid in accordance with the current rates of the Parish Council
- e) co-ordinate closely with the Environment Agency by
 - receiving flood warnings and
 - providing feed-back on the local situation
- f) When a flood warning is received
 - ensure that all those at risk are informed and arrange to post appropriate warnings on the village website and other social media as may be used across the community
 - implement the precautions, if any, specified in the flood plan
- g) In the event that flooding occurs
 - inform those agencies which need to know
 - assist, in so far as that is possible without personal risk, those whose life or property is threatened

4. Flood Warden Duty of Care

The personal safety of the flood warden is paramount and the flood warden is expressly instructed to avoid placing himself at risk in the course of his duties.

By running this scheme through Parish and Town Councils, their public liability insurance* will cover flood wardens in the event of anything occurring.

*Note: For liability due to negligence to be proved in a court of law it would have to be established that a warden deliberately took no action after receiving a flood warning message from the Agency and that flood losses occurred as a direct result. The chances of this happening are considered extremely small.