

# The best way to report flooding.

This document has been put together to provide Parish and Town councillors with information on the best way to report flood risk. The document can help you assist reporting flood risk and inform local residents on the most useful information for Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), and Highways as well as the Environment Agency (EA) on flooding that has taken place.

An effective and informative flood incident report means that we can process the information quicker, carry out an analysis and understand what the next steps should be easier. It also helps us to prioritise areas. The more detail the better as it can be useful in the future if for example any modelling is carried out.

## Flooding sources and who to report it to

There are different organisations that deal with specific sources of flooding. You can use the map at the following link to identify if the source is from a main river or ordinary watercourse. [Flood Risk Management Viewer \(arcgis.com\)](#). Table 1 provides details on which organisation is the most appropriate to report flooding to.

Table 1 Source of flooding and best organisation to report it to

Flooding Source	Who to report to:	Link to report flooding
Surface Water flooding Flooding from an ordinary watercourse Groundwater flooding	Lead Local Flood Authority (Hertfordshire County Council)	Fault report: <a href="#">What type of fault are you reporting?   Hertfordshire County Council</a>  Flood Incident questionnaire: <a href="https://surveys.hertfordshire.gov.uk/s/floodsurvey">https://surveys.hertfordshire.gov.uk/s/floodsurvey</a>
Road Flooding including gully or manhole surcharging	Hertfordshire County Council Highways	<a href="#">What type of fault are you reporting?   Hertfordshire County Council</a>
Foul sewer flooding or Surface water sewer	Thames Water or Anglian Water	Thames Water Phone number: 0800 316 9800 Anglian Water phone number: 03457 145 145
Main river Flooding	Environment Agency	During flooding events: EA hotline: 0800 80 70 60 After flood events: HNLFloodData@environment-agency.gov.uk

## Information to best support the LLFA

When investigating flooding there is information that will help the process and provide the LLFA with the information required to understand the cause of the flooding better. Through having this information, it not only saves time and resources, but it helps to ensure that the right recommendations for the area are identified. Table 2, takes you through our flood incident questionnaire and identifies the most useful details for a resident or Councillor to provide.

Table 2 Flood Incident Questionnaire beneficial information

Question	Information we are looking for:
Where did the water come from?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North/east/south/west</li> <li>• The name of roads indicating if there is more than one which they believe to have contributed the largest volume.</li> <li>• Try and identify which manhole or gully may be surcharging. Draw a sketch if it helps, take a picture of it and upload to questionnaire.</li> <li>• Was it coming from river or ordinary water course? <a href="http://arcgis.com">Flood Risk Management Viewer (arcgis.com)</a></li> <li>• Did water over top the banks or did water breach the banks?</li> </ul>
Has your road been affected? If so, how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Without going into the water (this can be dangerous) was the road passable by pedestrians? Was the road passable by cars?</li> <li>• Did the traffic cause bow waves?</li> <li>• Did any cars get stuck?</li> <li>• How far (in metres) does the flooding spread across the road or use house numbers e.g., flooding pooled from number 18 to number 26.</li> </ul>
Please describe any further incidents of flooding which have affected your property, of which you are aware, in the table below. (Specifically for the description/comments section)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Times from when the rain started, to when the water pooled to when the water flowed away e.g., rainfall started at 9am, water began to pool at 9.45am, rain stopped at 11.30am and water flowed away by 11.45am.</li> <li>• How far into the house did the water get? Was it just leaking around the doorway and other apertures or was it flowing heavily into the house and passing more than a metre internally.</li> <li>• Identify how you think the water got into the house e.g., doorway, airbricks, hole in mortar around bricks etc.</li> </ul>

## Taking photographs and videos

### **FRMreporting@hertfordshire.gov.uk**

Photographs and videos can be the most beneficial pieces of information that can be provided. This allows the LLFA to see the extent of the flooding and the source. So here are some tips for the best photos and videos to aid LLFA's investigation:

- Make sure you take a picture of the source. If the water is coming from a surcharging manhole, make sure you video or take a photograph of it and ensure to take one zoomed out so there are reference points we can use to identify exactly which manhole is flooding.
- Make sure you take pictures of flood depths at its' worst if able.
- Follow the water: if water is flowing down your road and then into your property follow the water. It helps us to know where the water is coming from, where it has larger areas of pooling and smaller ones as well as how far the water is travelling.

## Information to best support the Environment Agency

Please send flood information to us via email, using:

**HNLFloodData@environment-agency.gov.uk**

If possible, please include:

<b>Information</b>	<b>Include</b>
Photos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Dates and times</b> each photo were taken</li><li>• <b>Location of photos</b> (the most accurate way of doing this is by using what3words and providing us the three-word code for where the photos were taken. Google “what3words” to access this information)</li><li>• <b>Photos taken throughout the flooding</b> (including photos at different points during the flood if possible)</li></ul>
Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>10 – 20 second video of the flood</b> (any longer and the file may be too big to send to us via email. A short video will allow us to see where the water is flowing, and understand what has happened in your area)</li><li>• <b>Location of video</b> (the most accurate way of doing this is by using what3words and providing us the three-word code for where the video was taken. Google “what3words” to access this information)</li></ul>
Properties Affected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Property number</b></li><li>• <b>Street name</b></li><li>• <b>How many properties were affected?</b></li><li>• <b>Was the flooding internal or external?</b> (Definitions below) <i>Internal property flooding – flood water enters any part of the main footprint of the property, this includes adjoined garages with an internal door into the house.</i> <i>External property flooding – flood water enters the garden. External flooding would also include water entering outbuildings (including summer houses), garages without an adjoining door into the house.</i></li></ul>
Timings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>What time did the flooding start?</b></li><li>• <b>What time did water start entering gardens?</b></li><li>• <b>What time did water start entering properties?</b></li></ul>
Depth of Flood Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Approximately how deep was the flood water?</b></li><li>• <b>Photos of how high the water was – brick walls are good for depth scale as damp marks are left behind on the bricks.</b></li><li>• <b>Remember to include a zoomed-out photo of water marks to show the depth – this provides us with scale.</b></li></ul>
Source of Flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Where did the flood water come from?</b> <i>Did the water come from the river, drains, surface water (building up on the roads and pavements), or under your house?</i> <i>If the water looks like it is rising through your floorboards, this may be flooding from groundwater.</i></li></ul>

## Scenarios

The following page takes you through several scenarios of flooding and identifies who should be contacted. This should be used to help residents identify the most appropriate organisation for the flooding they have experienced.

### Scenario 1

Ordinary watercourse has a trash screen which is blocked due to riparian ownership not carrying out duties to ensure that the flow of the watercourse is not obstructed. This causes water to become backed up and breach the banks of the ordinary watercourse.

Check if it's a main river or ordinary watercourse using this map [Flood Risk Management Viewer \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)

Organisation to contact: Lead Local Flood Authority, Hertfordshire County Council

### Scenario 2

Road is flooding, water is surcharging out manhole/gullies in the road and pooling. The volume of water exceeds the kerbs height and flows onto residential driveway toward the property. The flood water has caused property damage.

Organisation to contact: Lead Local Flood Authority and Highways Hertfordshire County Council

### Scenario 3

Highway gully is blocked use Highways fault reporting and report as 'Drain blocked'.

[What type of fault are you reporting? | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

Organisation to contact: Highways, Hertfordshire County Council

### Scenario 4

The road or footway is flooded. (Note that we won't always be able to deal with issues immediately. We work to keep the roads safe first and may not be able to address the underlying reason for flooding immediately. However, we do collect information to plan future works. If you've previously reported an issue, please report it again so we can build up a record of the most seriously affected areas.

Organisation to contact: Highways, Hertfordshire County Council

#### Scenario 5

During very heavy rain, you see flooding coming from a main river. The water has reached over the top of the riverbank and is coming up the roads, causing pooling and mixing with surface water flooding.

Check if it's a main river or ordinary watercourse using this map [Flood Risk Management Viewer \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)

Organisation to contact: Environment Agency

#### Scenario 6

Because of heavy rain, the main river is very full and is flooding because of a blocked trash screen. The trash screen is blocked because of rubbish being thrown into the river, causing the water to back up and spill over the riverbank.

Check if it's a main river or ordinary watercourse using this map [Flood Risk Management Viewer \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)

Organisation to contact: Environment Agency