

Whitchurch-on-Thames Community Emergency Plan

Plan last updated on: 10 April 2025

If you are in immediate danger - Call 999

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1. Introduction

This is the Whitchurch-on-Thames Village Community Emergency Plan. The intention of this plan is to agree a clear process for handling likely emergency scenarios along with accountable individuals within the community to ensure that emergencies can be responded to quickly and effectively where time to respond can be critical. It is important that we are clear what actions should be taken and who is supposed to do what in such situations. The plan also identifies any required capabilities required in the village to ensure we can respond with the appropriate speed, e.g. back-up generator at the Village Hall, defibrillators in two key locations in the village.

The Emergency Plan has been developed by a team that comprises the key contacts identified in Sections 8 and 9 of this document. The Emergency Plan is reviewed at least annually using the following process:

- The Emergency Team meets annually to review the plan.
- The Clerk checks with all contacts identified in the document to comply with GDPR rules.
- Updates to plan approved by the Parish Council
- Plan distributed to web-site and other contacts described below including OCC/SODC emergency contacts.
- Coordinator arranges periodic drills.
- Other actions as described in Section 5.

2. Plan distribution list

Name	Role	Phone number/Email	Issued
Resilience Officer	Oxfordshire County Council Resilience Officer	01865 323765 emergencyplanning@oxfordshire.gov.uk Emergency Planning Unit, OFRS HQ, Sterling Road, Kidlington OX5 2DU	
Jim Donahue	Chairman of Parish Council	07557 668601 cllrdonahue.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com	
Brian Inglis	Parish Clerk	07737 982907 parishclerk.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com Can provide hard copies upon request	
Gary Carey	SODC Emergency Planning lead	gary.carey@southandvale.gov.uk or adrianna.partridge@southandvale.gov.uk 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, Abingdon OX14 4SB	
Adrian Dixon	WOT Village Website	Maintain the latest version of the plan for public to download.	
Various	WOT Emergency Management team	Contacts identified in this document telephone tree, Section 8	
Dawn Chesters	Primary School Head Teacher	Whitchurch-on-Thames Primary School, Eastfield Lane. 0118 9842347 Office@whitchurchprimary.org.uk	

3. Plan amendment list

Date of Amendment	Details of changes made	Changed by
4/12/2018	2nd draft	JB, HH, KB, DB, GW
05/01/2020	3 rd draft	JB, JD
07/02/2020	4 th Draft	Emergency Management Team meeting on 26 th Jan
16/02/2020	V1.0 Approved version	Approved by Parish Council on 13 th February 2020 meeting
22/02/2020	V1.1	Action item update following the PC meeting
31/03/2022	V1.2	Update following Annual Emergency Team Meeting
01/07/2022	V1.3	Correct formatting and contact information consistency. Add link to flooding and drainage report.
09/03/2023	V1.4	Updated following Annual Emergency Team Meeting
08/04/2024	V1.5	Updated following annual Emergency Team Meeting, DPR Review and editorial review.
10/04/2025	V1.6	Updated following annual Emergency Team Meeting and feedback for OCC Emergency Team.

3. Local risk assessment

Risk	Impact on community	What can the Community Emergency Group do to prepare?
<p>Flooding (Thames or surface)</p> <p>SODC Flooding information page including contact info for Environment Agency, Thames Water, and OCC road flooding: http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/environment-and-neighbourhood-issues/severe-weather/flooding</p> <p>Probability: High risk of significant flooding every 5 – 10 years as per Environment Agency assessment.</p>	<p>Low risk to life. Relatively small number of houses flooded.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use telephone tree to check vulnerable people and help warn, evacuate • Encourage residents to improve home flood defences (incl. getting own sand bags, warn new residents in welcome pack) • Parish Council to provide centralised source of sandbags to supplement local residents. • Flood Forum team raised Section 19 to OCC/SODC to investigate suspected blockage in the village water system causing January 2024 flooding. Geoff Weir continuing to work with Leigh Travers. • Create reception centre at Village Hall. • Drainage preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Street and Village Drainage monitoring – Village Flooding & Drainage Forum (see website report http://whitchurchonthames.com/flooding.html) • Whitchurch Hill drainage grips – PC/OCC – Cleared in February 2025 • Greyhound manhole grill to culvert below Eastfield Lane • Identify flood-vulnerable properties and encourage property owners to register with the EA's Floodline to receive telephone warnings.

<p><u>Roads/pavements Blocked</u> (Trees down, snow fall, toll bridge blocked, etc)</p>	<p>People unable to get to shops, school or work. Health visitors unable to get in.</p> <p>Note: The village is connected by three roads – unlikely all three blocked unless by heavy snow</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify people (via telephone tree, Internet/email tree) who need to get food, medicines or need to go to hospital. • Contact drivers of appropriate vehicles who could help. • Make sure we stay on OCC gritting list. • Ensure that salt bins are full before winter. • Investigate alternative pedestrian access across weir via the Mill House.
<p><u>Power cut</u> - if power is out for more than 6 hours in all of the village or a particular section.</p>	<p>No heating and/or lighting. Cooking hard for some. No broadband.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create reception centre at Village Hall (with provision to charge devices). • Demonstration of power outage scenario held at Village Hall March 2025. • Encourage residents requiring power for medical equipment to sign up for SSE Priority Services Register. • Encourage residents to be ready for emergency (as per leaflet – incl. keeping a store of candles, blankets and food not requiring heating).
<p>Someone has a <u>heart attack</u></p>	<p>Risk of death</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call 999 and use the defibrillator in Phone box at Manor Road/High Street junction or Village Green Pavilion. • Directions for use and access code will be provided by 999 operator. Note: Tim Hardwick maintains defibrillators in the Phone box and the one on the Village Green. • Jean-Marc Grosfort to arrange annual training classes in the Spring at the Village Hall.

<p><u>Other risks</u> that are considered low probability for which impacts that are difficult to predict include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contaminated water supply - Failure of water supply - Major sewage failure or blockage in the village - Spread of epidemic - Extreme cyber attack - Plane crash - Nuclear/chemical incident - etc. 	Unclear/varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the telephone tree to communicate to residents requesting information. • Consider meeting of members of emergency team to formulate plan to take appropriate steps
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5. Actions Now - in preparation

- EP 14 - Jean-Marc – Consider organising defibrillator training for the village annually if possible.
 - Emergency training held at Hardwick Estate January 2024.
 - Action left open as an ongoing reminder.
- EP 15 – Geoff Weir to act as the Emergency Team contact with Leigh Travers of SODC on the Section 19 request to address flooding in the village following the January 2024 flooding.
 - March 2025: Flood Forum and Parish Council to apply for Emergency funding grant to proceed SIDC work as requested by Leigh Travers.
 - OCC has accepted the Flood Forum's request to carrying out a "Section 19" investigation (i.e. under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010) and has assigned Leigh Travers, Flood Risk and Drainage Engineer with SODC in on behalf of OCC, who are the regulating authority for this Act.
 - The Flood Forum's view is that this investigation should focus what they believe to be a restriction in the flow in the culvert south of Eastfield Lane, but also to better understand the design, gradient, condition and capacity of the whole water course system through the village and what can be done to reduce the risk of flooding. John Southey is the main contact point with Leigh.
 - The Emergency team also noted that, under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 (regulated as above), riparian landowners have a duty to maintain watercourses within their property so water flow is unrestricted. Affected residents have been notified. Any proposed works on watercourses which may restrict the flow must receive prior consent from the regulating authority.

Complete:

- EP 4: Jim/J-M/John - to plan and arrange a drill for emergency power cut.
 - Mar 2025: Demonstration and training session held on the Village Hall emergency scenario. At least 4 members of the Emergency Team have been trained to run the village hall generators and emergency scenario.
- EP 12: Eastfield Lane power is not resilient. Geoff to investigate potential for grant to put cables underground.
 - March 2025: Can be closed as Eastfield Lane resiliency is similar to Hardwick Road and other village streets.
 - March 2024: Parish Council requested to initiate a consultation with SEN and local residents in Manor Road and Eastfield Lane who are supplied by pole mounted cable to explain the issue of safety, supply resilience, the trees and seek their views.
 - March 2023: Geoff investigated with SSE and grant is not available for putting cables underground. Geoff to raise request to SSE to come from Parish Council asking about the design of the power distribution network.
- EP 16: Parish Council to request an update from Thames Water on Eastfield Lane Sewage pumping station performance. Instrumentation had previously been added allowing Thames Water to monitor its performance.
 - March 2025 – new pumps installed at pumping station Sep-Dec 2024.
- Action EP6: J-M/John - Get Village Hall prepared – Mar 2024: Complete - Village Hall preparation is complete. Wifi and traditional phone not requiring a battery are in place. Petrol emergency generator has been purchased. LED

emergency lights, Kelly kettle, USB charging ports. It was agreed that bedding etc for overnight stays was not likely to be needed.

- EP 13 – Richard investigating where the village water source comes from and where the sewage is treated to post on the website. March 2020: Complete – report provided and available on village web-site.
- EP 15 - Jim – Write Bulletin article requesting if there are any trained Emergency Responders in the village. Complete – training provided to 2 councillors and other residents at Hardwick – January 2024.
- Action EP1: Jim - Review this plan with the PC – propose to add to February 2020 agenda. Once approved, send to OCC and SODC reps and contacts in Section 1. *16 Feb 2020: Done- approved at 13 Feb PC meeting. OCC and SODC contact sent copy of the approved plan.*
- Action EP2: John B - Confirm that OCC provide insurance cover for named volunteers, including use of chainsaw and 4x4s. Mar 2022: OCC does not cover it.
- Action EP3: Jim/Richard – Publish articles on Web-site/Bulletin – including publicizing SSE preferred access service. Done 2020
- Action EP7: Adrian Dixon - Encourage vulnerable villagers to register with SSE Priority Services Register. Ask surgery to promote this. – Done - 2020
- Action EP12: Jim to get Geoff a key for the notice board. *16 Feb 2020: Done.*
- Action EP9: Warren to arrange for CCTV investigating of the culvert with support from the PC. Feb 2022: No longer needed following the work OCC did to investigate after the flash flooding.
- Action EP10: Based on the results from Action EP8, Jim to consider requesting OCC or SODC notifies owners of houses of their responsibility to maintain the culvert. Mar 2022: OCC investigated the culvert and can be closed.
- Action EP11: Richard to check about pedestrian access to crossing at the Weir in case of blocked bridge. Feb 2022: Richard confirmed that local landowners are not prepared to provide access. Default option to drive to other river crossing at Goring or Reading.
- Action EP8: John – Prepare short leaflet summarising information they should know to prepare for an emergency including emergency contacts in the village. This can be used by telephone tree contacts to provide to residents who want more information. March 2023: Complete – leaflet distributed with Bulletin.




6. Local skills and resources assessment

Skill/ Resource	Volunteer	Phone number	Email
Tractor owner/driver	James Norman	07867 657156	jamesnorman1815@gmail.com
Chainsaw owners	Peter Woolhouse	0118 9844365	Sally.woolhouse@gmail.com
	Charles Cotgreave	07770 648722	Charles_Cotgreave@yahoo.co.uk
	Neil Huntington	07979 751985	hunters.87@outlook.com
	James Norman	07867657156	Jamesnorman1815@gmail.com
Trained in First Aid	Jim Donahue	07557668601	Jimdonahue7@gmail.com
	Debbie Leach	0118 9765905	debs.leach@btinternet.com
	Sarah Hanfrey	07958786825	sarah_hanfrey@hotmail.com

7. Key locations identified with emergency services for use as places of safety

Building	Location	Potential use in an emergency	Contact details of key holder
Village Hall - primary	Manor Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7EU, Emergency Team Contacts for Power Outage Scenario: John Bradon Charles Cotgreave Adrian Dixon Neil Huntington	Designated Rest Centre/safe place	Jean-Marc Grosfort Hartslock Lodge Hartslock Bridleway Whitchurch RG9 7QX 07881 312233 John Bradon Rylands, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch on Thames RG8 7HW 07789 944676
The Old Stables - alternate	High St, Whitchurch on Thames RG8 7DF	Rest Centre/safe place	Geoff Weir Geoff.weir@btinternet.com 07919 102610
Water and Food supplies	Pangbourne Co-Op Woodcote Co-Op	0118 984 2038 01491 680369	6-7 The Square, Pangbourne, RG8 7AG 2 Bridle Path, Woodcote, RG8 0SE

8. Emergency contact list

	<p>Name: Jim Donahue</p> <p>Title: Community Emergency Coordinator</p> <p>24hr telephone contact: 07557 668601</p> <p>Email: cllrdonahue.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com</p> <p>Address: 17 Hillside, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames, RG8 7HL</p>
	<p>Name John Bradon</p> <p>Title: Alternate contact</p> <p>24hr telephone contact: 07789 944676</p> <p>Email: john@jbradon.co.uk</p> <p>Address: Rylands, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch on Thames RG8 7HW</p>
	<p>Name Jean Marc Grosfort</p> <p>Title: Village Hall Manager</p> <p>24hr telephone contact: 07881 312233</p> <p>Email: jmgwhd48@gmail.com</p> <p>Address: Hartslock Lodge, Hartslock Bridleway, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7QX</p>

9. Telephone Tree/WhatsApp Group

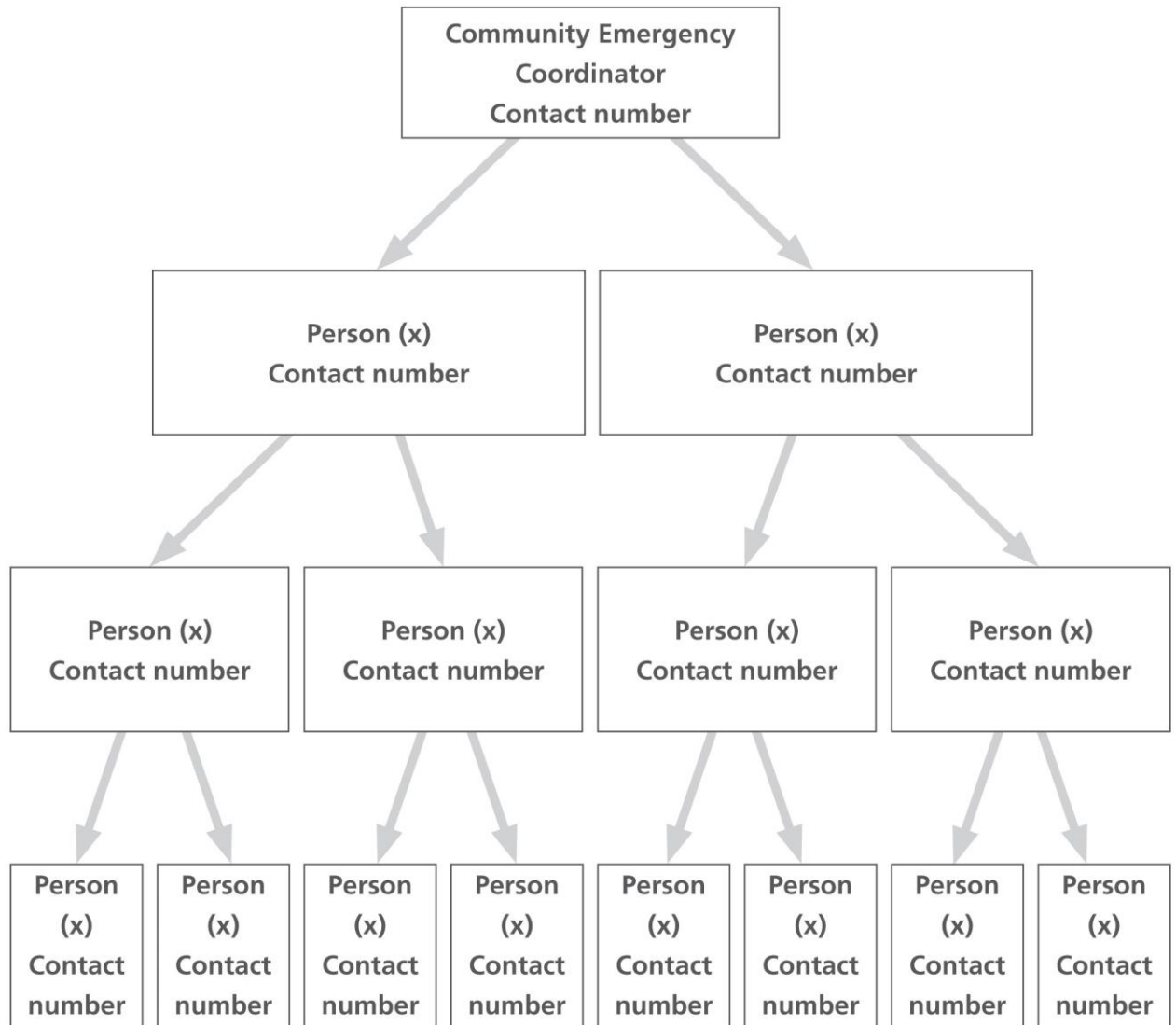
The phone tree works as a pyramid, with the coordinator at the top making the first call to two or more people. In turn, they call an assigned set of people and so on, until the tree is complete.

Role of street/area coordinator:

- Area coordinators should be generally aware of people in their street or area, particularly anyone with special requirements such as medical equipment that requires power or a house that is particularly subject to flooding, etc.
- Area coordinators will distribute leaflets identifying key emergency preparation activities that all residents should be aware of. The leaflet will provide emergency telephone tree contacts. Residents should let their Area Coordinators know if they want to be notified of emergencies.
- In the event of an emergency, the overall coordinator, or an alternate, will ensure that all the area coordinators are aware of what is happening via WhatsApp, email, or telephone. The village web-site and Facebook page will also provide information.
- Depending on the situation, we may decide to call a meeting of the Emergency Team at the Village Hall and use it as a support centre for the village.

Volunteers by Area

Road/Area	Volunteer	Phone number	Email
High Street South (from Bridge to Manor Road)	Geoff Weir	07919 102610	geoff.weir@btinternet.com
High Street North of Manor Rd, incl Hartslock Bridleway	Jean-Marc Grosfort	07881 312233	jmgwhd48@gmail.com
Hardwick Road	Adrian Dixon	07973 187139	adrian@adriandixon.com
Hillside	Jim Donahue	07557 668601	Cllrdonahue.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com
Swanston Field	Gordon Bull	07900 914407	gbull13160@aol.com
Eastfield Lane	Neil Huntington	07979 751985	hunters.87@outlook.com
Manor Road	Katherine Higley		Cllrhigley.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com
Hardwick Road (Bozedown farm to Hardwick Estate)	Sally Woolhouse	07956 037927	Sally.woolhouse@gmail.com
Hardwick Estate	Miriam Rose	07765 501687	miriam@hardwickestate.co.uk
Coordinator	Jim Donahue	07557 668601	Cllrdonahue.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com
Coordinator	John Bradon	07789 944676	john@jbradon.co.uk



10. List of community organisations that may be helpful in identifying vulnerable people or communities in an emergency

Organisation	Name and role of contact	Phone number
Pangbourne & District Volunteer Centre	09:30 to 11:30 every weekday (except public holidays)	0118 984 4586
Boathouse Surgery	08:00 to 18:30 Monday - Friday	0118 984 2234
SSE Priority Services Register	Register for priority support in event of a power cut, e.g. if you rely on power for medical equipment, or need extra help for any reason	0800 622 838

11. Activation triggers

Record details of how your plan will be activated. You should include details of how the plan will be activated as a result of a call from the emergency services, and also how your community will decide to activate the plan yourselves, if the emergency services are unavailable:

1. When we get a flood warning
2. If power is out for more than 6 hours in any part of the village
3. If water is out for more than 6 hours in any part of the village
4. When OCC, SODC or any of the emergency team contacts the Chairman

12. First steps in an emergency

[Use this space to add the steps to be followed in when the plan is activated]

	Instructions	Tick
1	Ensure you are in no immediate danger	
2	Call 999 (unless already alerted)	
3	Contact the Community Emergency Group via WhatsApp and email and, if necessary, meet with team members to discuss the situation.	
4	Contacts on telephone tree check that all people requesting to be contacted are OK	
5	Contact Oxfordshire County Council Resilience On-Call Officer' to inform them of the incident and the emergency plan has been activated on 01865 323765 (24/7)	

13. Actions agreed with emergency responders in the event of an evacuation

1. Help police/local authority with door knocking
2. Tell emergency services who might need extra help to leave their home

14. Alternative arrangements for staying in contact if usual communications have been disrupted

Communication Type	Name of contact	Location
WOT Web-site	Adrian Dixon	www.whitchurchonthames.com
Facebook Group – Only Good Vibes - Whitchurch	Jim Donahue	
Village Notice Board	Geoff Weir	High Street opposite Eastfield Lane
WhatsApp Group – Emergency planning team	Jim Donahue/All	WhatsApp/email