



GUIDE FOR RESIDENTS

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Flooding in Thames Ditton



Flooding in this high risk area of Thames Ditton is possible. This leaflet outlines what would happen in case of a flood, and the things that residents should plan for individually.

August 2020



Thames Ditton
and Weston Green
Residents Association
Flood Sub-Committee



EA Floodline (24 hr)

0345 988 1188

Elmbridge BC
Switchboard
Out of hours

0137 247 4474

0300 369 0576

Emergency and threat to life

999

***You received this information pack because you are at risk.
Hold on to this information.***

Thames Ditton is at risk of flood from the river and from surface water

1. What we know

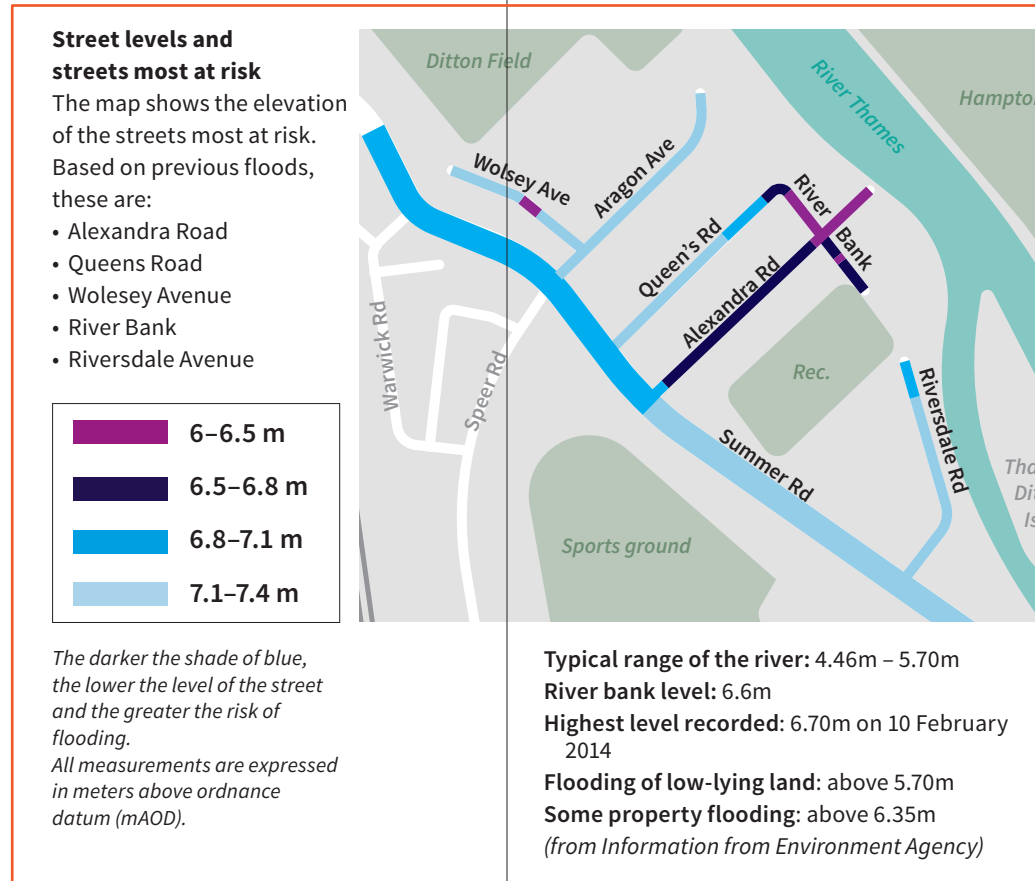
Based upon experience in 2003, 2013–2014 and the 2019 winter, river levels can rise quickly requiring prompt action. If the river rises this could cause flooding on the road or into your home:

- either because of a general rise in the water table (water seeping in from under the floor)
- or because the river has burst its banks and flood water is coming out of the drains.

We have also experienced the river level rising and falling over the months of wet weather.

2. What is changing

In past years, the residents of Alexandra Road have had a visible warning of flood hazard with the water coming through the drains and into the street. From now on, this will no longer be the case, as Thames Water has installed a non-return valve covering River Bank, Alexandra Road and Queens Road.



This prevents river water entering the drains. Once the river has reached the level of the river bank, water will rush onto the roads. Therefore, residents will receive no visible early warning of a potential flood. This makes it more important that you sign up for flood alerts if you are at risk.



Staying up to date during wet weather p.4–5

Where to find information about local flood risk in our area

What to expect during and after a flood p.6–7

Who does what in planning for and responding to a flood

You are at risk: Start preparing today p.8–9

Practical advice for preparing in advance of a flood

If a flood is expected in our area: Act now p.10–11

Practical advice in case of a flood

Recovering from a flood: What next? p.12

Key steps and sources of useful information

Staying up to date during wet weather

Different kinds of flood information and where to find it

The Environment Agency and the Met Office have several ways of conveying flood information. Some of the flood risk information might not seem simple at first sight. It is important to familiarise yourself with the available information beforehand. This will ensure you are able to react to a local flood alert.

1 Flood warning service

The Environment Agency has a service which sends warnings by phone, email or text message. To make sure you get alerts most relevant to you, sign up to the **Thames Ditton** and the **Thames Ditton Island** area.

The Thames Ditton Island monitoring station is the closest and rising river levels at that station are likely to affect our area.

Things to do now:

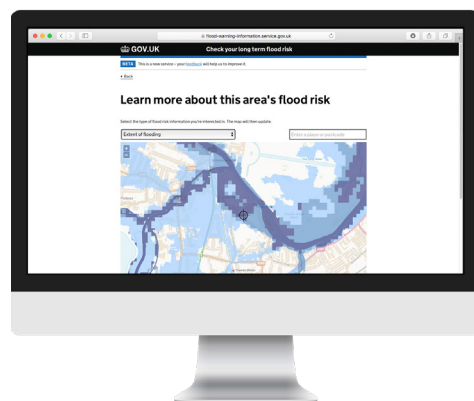
- Ensure you are registered to receive Flood Alerts and Warnings for Thames Ditton Island.
- Go to <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings> and follow the link to register online
- Or register by phone: 0345 988 1188

2 Flood map of risk in the area

The Environment Agency has Flood maps in which it is possible to check the risk of long term flood from the River, and the risk and extent of flooding from other sources, such as surface water and reservoirs.

Things to do now:

- Go to <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk> and familiarise yourself with the types of floods that Thames Ditton is vulnerable to.



The River Thames at Thames Ditton Island:

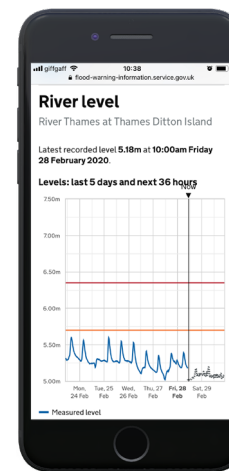
- Typical range is 4.46m to 5.70m.
- River bank level: 6.6m.
- Highest level recorded is 6.70m on 10 February 2014.
- Flooding of low-lying land may occur if river level is above 5.70m.
- Some property flooding may occur if river level is above 6.35m.

3 River level at Thames Ditton Island

You can check the level of the River Thames on the Environment Agency website. Data is available at any given time for the last five days.

Things to do now:

- Go to <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/station/7246> and familiarise yourself with the river height data.
- Check your local street height on the Residents Association website so that you can relate it to the river height.



4 Flood alerts

The Environment Agency and the Met Office use three official flood codes to signal different levels of alert and to alert the severity of a flood situation.

Things to do now:

- Familiarise yourself with the flood codes.
- Follow the Met Office and the Environment Agency on Twitter.



Flood Alert

Flooding is possible. Be prepared — Used 2 hrs to 2 days before a flood.



Flood Warning

Flooding is expected. Immediate action required — Used 1/2 hour to 1 day before a flood.



Severe Flood Warning

Severe flooding. Danger to life — Used when flooding poses a significant threat to life.

What to expect during and after a flood



Warning

The Environment Agency issues flood warnings. It is responsible for building, maintaining and operating flood defences.

The council gives local advice about the incident and what to do. **Local authorities** will have plans in place to respond to and control or reduce the impact of an emergency.



Response

If a flood is forecasted in our area, The Environment Agency and Elmbridge Borough Council, together with the emergency services have a coordinated action plan to:

- provide warnings
- install a temporary barrier and pumps if appropriate
- assist vulnerable people to evacuate and access rest centres if necessary
- direct traffic to safe areas, etc.



Individual safety

Individual safety is **each person's responsibility**, including putting flood equipment in place, moving important objects out of water's reach, insert flood protection equipment, moving your car, etc.

See pages 8–9 and 10–11 for specific advice to help you plan and act.

If my road floods, who will clean it?

Roads will be cleaned by Surrey Highways. Elmbridge Borough Council will not be able to clean houses and gardens. It is the property owner/landlord's responsibility to clean the property.

Where can I get more information about what to expect?

The Environment Agency has more information describing what organisations do following a flood.

► <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/what-happens-after-a-flood>

Will there be a place to go if my house floods?

If your house floods and you can't find accommodation with friends or family, Elmbridge Borough Council will look to provide **temporary shelter** in a rest centre or similar accommodation and provide details of the exact location to those in need of support.

Will there be help for those who are vulnerable?

You might be especially vulnerable and not able to carry out preparedness measures by yourself. If you have contacts in the Council that have assisted you in respect of your particular vulnerability before, seek advice from them now.

A **priority services register** is held by utility companies. Register with them if you are eligible. The Citizens Advice Bureau has information on their website to help you determine which utility company to register with and how to do so.

► www.citizensadvice.org.uk

How can I find out more about how local flood risk is being managed?

Any important flood information will be circulated by the Thames Ditton Residents Association. If you are subscribed, ensure your email details are up to date. If you are not subscribed but want to receive information, register at

► www.residents-association.com/subscribe

Will the local flood group help if there is a flood?

The Thames Ditton Residents Association Flood Group is primarily concerned with ensuring that proper planning is in place and communicating with residents. If a flood takes place, first level responders, such as the local authorities and emergency services, will be onsite helping residents.

You are at risk: Start preparing today

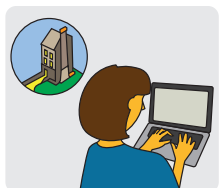
1 If you only do one thing: Find out if your home is at risk and sign up for alerts



- Check your flood risk online
www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk
- Check how local flood information applies to you
- Sign up for Flood Alerts and Warnings at Thames Ditton Island station
online: www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings
call Floodline: 0345 988 1188

see more in page 4-5

2 Protect your home from flood water



- Estimate the height of your property in relation to the street level
- Check your insurance policy covers you for flooding
- Think about how water could enter your home
- Consider flood protection equipment
A good place to start is www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk

3 Plan what you would do



- Make a personal flood plan
- Make an inventory of what you have in your house
- Store **important documents** safely: In a high place, in polythene bags to protect them from flood water
- If you have **pets**, identify somewhere to take them if flooding is imminent
- If you have a **car**, identify somewhere safe to move it prior to a flood
- Identify who could help and who you can turn to during flooding. Look out for neighbours or others who may need help.

Why make a flood plan?

Making a flood plan helps you to prepare in advance and gather important information you would need during a flood. Once completed, keep it somewhere safe and easy to reach.

► www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-flood-plan

Why make an inventory of my home?

If you are affected by a flood, the insurance company is likely to ask for a list of any damaged property. For this, it is handy to have a record of your belongings, and making a video is an easy and quick way to do this.

Where should I park my car in a flood?

Identify a place in advance and make your own arrangements. Make sure it is on higher ground, and in a road unlikely to be closed off by emergency services.

Can the National Flood Forum help me?

The National Flood Forum provides guidance on household flood prevention measures and products that are available.

► www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk

Do sandbags work?

Sandbags have limited effectiveness and are difficult to source during a flood. Consider other kinds of flood protection equipment, such as airbricks or vent covers, flood doors, and toilet bungs. A directory of flood services and products is available at Blue Pages.

► <http://bluepages.org.uk>

I am unable to carry out some of the advice on my own.

If you are unable to carry out the advice for before, during and after a flood, ask for help from friends, family or others. Talk to your neighbours and advise the council that you need help should there be an emergency.

Is it useful to use social media for flood updates?

Most, if not all the organisations involved in flood warning and response are on Twitter, and they post warnings and other updates. Follow the Environment Agency, Met Office and Elmbridge Borough Council.

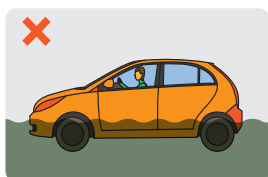
If a flood is expected in our area: Act now

If you only do one thing: Move things to safety



- Insurance papers, **documents** and items of personal value
- Car**: move your car to higher ground if flood water hasn't reached you
- Furniture**: start with lightweight things, furniture that is expensive or harder to repair

Keep safe from flood water



Don't drive through flood water.

Less than two feet of water can be enough to float a vehicle.



Avoid contact with flood water.

Only four inches of fast flowing water can knock a person over and there may be unseen hazards beneath the surface.



Wear rubber gloves and boots.

Flood water can contain sewage, chemicals and animal waste.



If you come into contact with flood water, wash thoroughly.



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1 In case of flood alert



- Be alert and watch the river levels**
- Pack a bag with essentials**
Insurance and identity documents; emergency essentials; food and water; medication; personal items for you, your children and pets.
- Follow the updates** *see page 4*
On Twitter: Environment Agency, Elmbridge Council
Local radio: BBC Radio Surrey, Radio Jackie 107.8
Flood warnings, weather forecast and local river levels

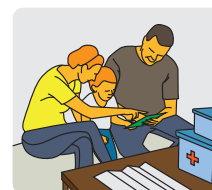
2 In case of flood warning



- Prepare to move your car**
- Stop water entering your home**
Put flood protection equipment in place, Block ground floor toilet to prevent blowback, Plug water inlet pipes with towels or cloths
- Help and ask for help**
Check neighbours that need help. If you need to move furniture, call family, friends and neighbours.
- Switch off gas and electricity at the mains**
- Make a video of the rooms at risk as a quick inventory**
- Move important things to safety** *see opp. page*



3 In case of flood severe warning



- Stay in a safe place with a means of escape**
- Be ready if you need to evacuate your home**
- Take advice from the emergency services**
- Call 999 if you are in immediate danger**

Recovering from a flood: What next?

If you are returning to your home after a flood, here are a few of the steps you will need to do.

- If you rent your home, **contact your landlord** as soon as possible.
- **Make records and photograph your damage.** Contact your insurer. If you do not have insurance, contact the council for information on grants or other types of help.
- **Ensure it is safe to return home.** Beware of danger from sewage overflow, electrical and gas problems when returning to your property. Don't turn on electricity or gas until checked by a qualified engineer.

- **Clean your house safely.** Always wear waterproof protective gear: outerwear, gloves, boots and face mask. **Always wash your hands.**



Find more information:

The Environment Agency
<https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/recovering-after-a-flood>

National Flood Forum
<https://nationalfloodforum.org.uk/about-flooding/recovering/what-should-i-do/>

Surrey Prepared
<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/flooding-advice>

Notes / Useful numbers



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