

Dear Executive Flood Officers,

If you hadn't already seen it, the attached may be a useful regional update for you in current times from Jonathan Glerum at Anglian Water.

As for most of us, our team are also under a lot of pressure at the moment. Our cabinet member Cllr Simon Walsh has just issued this message to all Essex County Council members on our behalf:

Dear Essex County Council Members,

Since the 4th December 2020 a persistent period of wet weather has resulted in numerous flood incidents across Essex. Our flood and water management team have seen a dramatic increase in the number of enquiries relating to ordinary watercourses and flooding to private property. Since the Flood and Water Management Act came into place (2010) we have never seen multiple surface water issues across such a wide area of the County.

There is a huge expectation being placed on us in our role as the 'Lead Local Flood Authority'. Flooding issues are often complex, involving multiple agencies and with no quick fix. Our general experience over the past month is that residents continue to lay blame somewhere or appeal for permanent solutions to prevent future flooding altogether. We will be doing everything we can, but your support in promoting private responsibilities and community resilience/preparedness would be most welcome.

During these busy times, please note the following:

- We can offer any property that has been affected by the recent flooding a '**Property Flood Resilience**' grant of up to £8k per property. Details on www.flood.essex.gov.uk
- Internal flooding of property is currently our flood team's priority (as opposed to gardens or 'nuisance' flooding).
- We work closely with Essex Highways, any issues of flooding on the roads should be directed to them in the first instance, via their online portal.
- Maintenance of watercourses and pipes outside the highway are ultimately a private responsibility. We do everything to avoid formal enforcement of maintenance using our permissive powers and would only do so where communities/individuals are not willing to action themselves.
- There are 36,000 properties at risk from surface water/rainfall flooding in Essex. We encourage everyone to check their flood risk at www.flood.essex.gov.uk and take steps to prepare where needed.
- The floods team are not a 24hr emergency response function and cannot provide sandbags or other immediate flood protection.

Cllr Simon Walsh

See you at the Essex Flood Board meeting on the 18th Feb.

Kind Regards,

Lucy

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