

Emergency Response for Corfe Castle

An emergency response may be needed for Corfe Castle at time a time of flood, biohazard (Wytch Farm), natural disaster (weather or pandemic) or war. At present, flooding is the likeliest problem.

History of flooding: the risk is at the junction of the A351 & B3351 roads. 1st May 1997 the Corfe Castle flood contingency plan was approved. The object of this plan was to ensure that traffic could pass safely and the public were not stranded on either side of the flooded area. It was initiated by contacting:

The Swanage Railway Company – to run trains on an hourly basis between a stop above Castle View Car Park & Swanage with stops in between. (Note: Norden car park was not available then.)

The Police – traffic control

The National Trust – to make sure Castle View's lights were on

The bus company - contacted so that arrangements could be made to swap drivers between Castle View and The Square.

On 1st April 2005 the Environment Agency took over from PDC the management of the Corfe River and the Byle Brook. It cleared the river in February 2006 under Section 165 of the Water Resources Act 1991 which gave it general powers to carry out flood defence and drainage works.

It should also be noted that No. 50, West Street, also suffered from flooding in 1995.

Present risk in 2015: wetter winters are predicted so there is a greater likelihood of flooding. The same area still floods because:

- a. St Edward's Bridge was not widened to allow increase flow
- b. Problems with the bed slope, channel geometry combined with the narrow bridge and higher tides
- c. Excessive vegetation and debris causing obstruction

It should be noted that downstream the water levels are not a problem.

The Parish Council has no operational response re Wytch Farm.

In the event of an emergency, call: the police, fire & rescue, ambulance, coastguard & the Environment Agency in which ever order is appropriate. PDC should also be contacted.

A note on watercourses: any watercourses abutting a property are owned to the centre of the watercourse unless their deeds stipulate otherwise. The owners have a duty to maintain the riverbed, the banks, and clear litter and debris.

Action:

1. Keep a list of useful emergency numbers such as:
Environment Agency's floodline: 0845 988 1188
Environment Agency's hotline: 0800 807 060
Police
Doctor & Doctor's surgery
Local Hotels
2. Keep a list of telephone numbers of households likely to be affected by flooding e.g. the cottages at the lower end of East Street and Boar Mill. Make sure that

these households are prepared for flooding (have a torch, rubber gloves, medical kit & their insurance number to hand)

3. Keep a list of tractor owners and their contact details.
4. Check that the list of emergency numbers and who to call at PDC is up to date. Is the DCC Duty EPO still on 07623 544 346?
5. Have a list of landowners who abut the Corfe River and the Byle and make sure that they clear their watercourses annually.
6. Check that the Environment Agency is still responsible for the Corfe River and the Byle. Who cleared the section of the Byle running around the Castle base?

Queries:

1. Who supplies sandbags?
2. Can the village hall or school still be used as a reception area? Are they aware of this?
3. In case of a total communications black out, who is our local RAYNET operator (handheld radio operator)?
4. Is the Parish Council still alerted when Exercises are taking place at Wytch Farm? (Note: last letter on file dated August 2003 yet one took place in October 2015)
5. Is the original emergency plan formulated in 1997 still operational?

Louise Haywood
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