

ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL

LEAD COUNCILLOR REPORT

NAME:	Cllr Clive Neal-Sturgess
TOPIC:	Flood Working Group
DATE:	25th October 2024
UPDATE SINCE LAST REPORT:	<p>Meeting 18th October 2024: Present: Clive Neal-Sturgess, Andrew Foster, Mike Bowe, Vanessa Lowe, Kyla Brown and Wendy Mills as Communications Lead Councillor.</p> <p>Progress on Food Wardens Handbook and training:</p> <p>Clive reported that CSW run an event for flood wardens which could provide appropriate training. Kyla agreed to look into this. She also recommended the Communities Prepared Flood Volunteer Session which is an online and are recommended by WALC. It was agreed that an online session would be the first stage of training.</p> <p>Kyla agreed to also contact the relevant officers in the Technical Specialist (Highways) Team at WCC to arrange for them to come to Alcester and provide appropriate training for volunteers under WCC's Lengthsman Scheme (https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/community/lengthsman-scheme). WCC also provides basic PPE under this scheme. Volunteers would thereby have signed a volunteer agreement and had appropriate training through WCC.</p> <p>This training will lead to a 'rebranding' of flood wardens between those who, in a flood event, are best-placed to be physically deployed; and those who are prepared to monitor the situation or communicate with residents. It was agreed that 'Flood Warden' should be changed to 'Flood Guardian'.</p> <p>It was agreed that Kyla would review the work done to date on the Community Flood Action Plan and Flood Wardens Action Plan, with a view to producing a succinct Flood Guardian Handbook, along with a single laminated 'Grab' sheet for each volunteer detailing the key elements of the Community Flood Plan and their individual area of responsibility (ie a specified geographic 'patch' or role), which would detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ the various triggering events 1, 2 and 3 (a combination of Met Office weather warning level, flood alert versus flood warning versus severe flood warning, and height of the river level)▪ details of evacuation centres, equipment list, useful contacts, local area flood wardens and list of residents requiring assistance in that volunteer's 'patch'.

	<p>Cascade of decision-making</p> <p>It was agreed that the current volunteer WhatsApp group should be further refined; there would be a lead group of decision-makers including the Councillor Leads and ATC staff; who would notify the Flood Guardians via a second WhatsApp Group when a trigger level has been reached, and who would manage the volunteers' tasks at that trigger level.</p> <p>This second WhatsApp group would include all the Flood Guardians who, at each trigger level, will know what's expected of them when the relevant message arrives.</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>It was agreed that the rebranded plan is to be communicated with volunteers via email as soon as possible, and to all residents via the winter newsletter – along with an open invitation to any further residents who wish to volunteer as Flood Guardians (Kyla noted that two individuals have recently come forward).</p> <p>The winter newsletter would also include a map or list detailing roads that have been previously affected by flooding (following Susan's Juned's report), with confirmation that those residents living on these roads would receive a letter with an advice note imminently (already drafted by Vanessa). Councillors would deliver these to affected households.</p> <p>The next discussion group session - date TBC.</p>
<p>FUTURE PLANS:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It was agreed that an online session would be the first stage of Flood Warden training. 2. Volunteers would have to sign a volunteer agreement and have appropriate training through WCC. 3. A 'rebranding' of flood wardens to take place called "Flood Guardians". 4. It was agreed that Kyla would review the work done to date on the Community Flood Action Plan and Flood Wardens Action Plan, with a view to producing a succinct Flood Guardian Handbook. 5. It was agreed that the current volunteer WhatsApp group should be further refined and there would be a lead group of decision-makers including the Councillor Leads and ATC staff. 6. It was agreed that the rebranded plan is to be communicated with volunteers via email as soon as possible, and to all residents via the winter newsletter – along with an open invitation to any further residents who wish to volunteer as Flood Guardians 7. The next discussion group session date TBC.

