



DINAS POWYS

FLOOD ACTION GROUP

Dinas Powys Community Flood Plan v2

January 2024

Introduction

This plan has been prepared by Dinas Powys Flood Action Group (DPFAG) and replaces previous draft plans circulated in 2022.

Dinas Powys sits on the River Cadoxton and is prone to flash floods in response to heavy rain. On 23 December 2020 we experienced the worst flood in living memory and 100 properties were flooded internally. There are approximately 300 properties at risk of flooding. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) provide a Flood Warning system for the river, and through their website also provide live river and rain data. Further details about how flooding affects Dinas Powys can be found [here](#) (hyperlink to doc 1 in list below once finished)

The unfortunate reality is that during a flood event there will be almost no practical support from outside to householders. The Emergency Services will get involved but only when the flood is serious enough to threaten life and limb. The Vale of Glamorgan Council used to provide sandbags but no longer do so. The one organisation from outside Dinas Powys that might be able to help us during a flood is CAVRA (the Civil Aid Voluntary Rescue Association) who are a volunteer search and rescue organisation based in Sully.

The onus is therefore on individual property owners to prepare themselves for flooding, and to help with this Welsh Government is providing funds for properties to be supplied with Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures (e.g. flood gates, airbrick covers etc) and this is expected to be rolled out in 2024. For many people this expectation that we will use our PFR measures when a flood is expected will be fine, but many vulnerable residents will not be able to meet this expectation and even the best prepared householders can be caught out if they are away from home, especially with the speed of the floods experienced in the village where peak river water levels can follow just 2 or 3 hours after the rainfall.

Natural Resources Wales are the national body with responsibility for flooding matters and they may take action in future years to reduce our flood risk (Natural Flood Management, works in the river channel). However, progress is slow and the types of work they are investigating may reduce the risk but will never eliminate it entirely. Given that extreme rainfall events are forecast to become more

frequent as a result of climate change we must expect to live with some level of flood risk in perpetuity.

This plan is proposed to help the residents of Dinas Powys learn to live with its flood risk. The aim of this plan are as follows:

- Help warn residents when a flood is expected.
- Help vulnerable residents in the flood zone to prepare for a flood.
- Help residents decide what action to take during a flood event.
- Encourage communications and arrangements between neighbours to help protect properties from flooding.

Experience from 'near-miss' flood events since December 2020 and from earlier attempts at a Community Flood Plan shows that there is a lot of interest and good will within the village for people to help each other, particularly at the street level with neighbours helping each other. It also shows that clear communication channels are vital for any effective community response, and that several methods of communication (social media, phone, face-to-face) will be needed simultaneously if we are to involve everyone in the flood zone. Other issues were also encountered which have informed this plan e.g. the administrative difficulty of collecting and storing information about vulnerable residents.

We therefore propose this plan which is based on establishing three key groups of people and a communications network that links them together. These groups are **Street Representatives** for the areas in the flood zone, **Flood Volunteers** from the rest of the village, and a **Coordination Team**, as set out below.

Street Representatives

StreetReps are the foundation of the community response to flooding. They act as 'good neighbours' for their immediate locality, usually their street, part street or other group of flood-affected properties. They will usually be someone who lives in the locality or has very strong connections with the locality and lives nearby. Any one street or area would ideally have more than one StreetRep in case of absences. Areas covered could range from as few as c.5-10 houses up to 20-30 houses.

Main role:

- Know which neighbours are most vulnerable to flooding and most likely to need help.
- Communication within the locality, passing on and gathering information, before, during and after flood events and potential events. May require some 'door-knocking'. A street WhatsApp group or similar may be useful.
- Coordinating neighbourly assistance within the locality.
- Drawing in central assistance when necessary, using a dedicated WhatsApp group for StreetReps shared with the Coordination Team.

If StreetReps are keen the role could also include:

- Planning ahead for future floods e.g. arrangements to help neighbours with PFR, covering for each other when people are away from home, etc.

- Monitoring the river and drains nearby and reporting problems to NRW, the Vale or Welsh Water.
- Observations of local water movement and levels during a flood to build up understanding.
- Small-scale works to maintain flood readiness e.g. keeping leaves out of drains in autumn.
- Collating local questions and opinions on flooding matters, distributing newsletters etc.

Flood Volunteers

A pool of local volunteers who may be able to help during a flood event, but who are not personally affected by flooding. The group will be coordinated through a dedicated WhatsApp group shared with the Coordination Team. Tasks that could be taken on by volunteers include:

- Helping residents physically prepare their homes for flooding – e.g. moving furniture, sandbags, installing PFR.
- Vehicle support (especially 4x4) moving resources (e.g. sandbags, floodsax, pumps), and people (e.g. residents returning from work, residents that need to evacuate).
- Clear-up works after a flood.
- Acting as **Flood Warden** where Street Reps need more support – door-knocking to ensure residents are aware of incident and latest advice, targeted help for more vulnerable residents, etc. Training and some PPE provided.
- Traffic management – trying to keep traffic off key roads, assisting with official road closures if these can be arranged, etc.
- Setting up and running evacuation centres during an extreme event, based at the Parish Hall site and potentially Hebron Hall if over-night accommodation is needed for vulnerable residents.

Could also include:

- Monitoring the river and drains and reporting problems to NRW, the Vale or Welsh Water.
- Contribute to observations of local water movement and levels during a flood to build up understanding, including calibration with the river level gauge, and potentially leading to local triggers for action (e.g. when it gets to X on the gauge start fitting PFR to properties on Streets A B and C).
- Small-scale works to maintain flood readiness e.g. keeping leaves out of drains in autumn.
- Collating local questions and opinions on flooding matters, distributing newsletters etc.

Coordination Team

The coordination team acts as a community hub for action on flood incidents. The team will be 3 or 4 individuals who are good communicators and well-versed with flood matters and the way floods tend to affect the village. CAVRA will also be involved from an early stage if they are available. The team may not need or choose to get together in minor incidents but in a major incident we can use (subject to availability) one of the rooms on the Parish Hall site, courtesy of DPCC.

The areas of work for this team are as follows:

1. Flood prediction
 - a. Monitoring weather warnings and forecasts, river levels and rainfall

- b. Evaluating Flood Alerts using data and observations of the river, rainfall, weather forecasts etc.
- 2. Communication with StreetReps
 - a. Maintain StreetReps WhatsApp group.
 - b. Monitor WA group regularly to pick up observations, issues and requests for help.
 - c. Regular WA posts with updates on flood predictions, weather, river level, etc.
 - d. WA posts with advice on whether/when to alert their neighbours, deploy PFR, etc.
 - e. WA posts on what help is available, encouraging them to seek support.
- 3. Communication with Flood Volunteers
 - a. Maintain FloodVols WhatsApp group.
 - b. Monitor WA group regularly to pick up observations, issues and offers or requests for help.
 - c. Regular WA posts with updates on flood predictions, weather, river level, etc.
 - d. Seek and deploy volunteers in response to specific requests for help from StreetReps, or where the Coordination Team identify specific needs.
- 4. Communication with the general public
 - a. Use the Dinas Powys Flood News FB page to provide updates on flood predictions, weather, river level, etc.
 - b. Monitor other social media channels within the village (e.g. Dinas Powys Chat FB page) and respond or post as appropriate.
 - c. In a major incident consider 'shout outs' for more volunteers if that would be useful.
- 5. Liaison with DPCC and other community groups
 - a. Liaison before, during and after incidents.
 - b. To include use of DPCC hall(s) for coordination team and as an evacuation centre, storage of resources, etc.
- 6. Liaison with CAVRA, Emergency Services and potential evacuation centres in major events.
 - a. Essential since local volunteers MUST not get involved in wet rescues.

Supporting Information (In Preparation)

This plan will be supported by more detailed information as it becomes available. This will be hosted by DPCC on their web site and will need to include the following:

- 1. Flood behaviour and prediction in Dinas Powys (based on part 2 of the last draft plan)
- 2. * Coordination Team contact details
- 3. * Street Representatives details and areas covered
- 4. * Flood Volunteers details, including details of who has had Flood Warden training.
- 5. Inventory of resources – flood warden kits, any PFR we might raise money for, etc.
- 6. Other advice stuff for residents – red cards, property flood plan, etc.

* = would not be included in any version available to the public.

AGP

16 January 2024