

# **London Diocesan Advisory Committee**



## **ADVICE ON FLOODING IN CHURCHES**

### **Action to take in advance of flood warning**

- Undertake a risk assessment of the Church and/or its ancillary buildings. This will help you to establish which areas of the Church site are most at risk of flooding, and enable you to work out a strategy appropriate to the building(s) in question for dealing with an emergency situation.
- Appoint a flood officer (whose own home or business is on high ground) to keep an eye on the Church. Assemble a list of volunteers, with their contact details, to assist in an emergency situation.
- Keep a list of useful telephone numbers. This should include the emergency services; the Environment Agency (0845 988 1188); your utilities suppliers; your Archdeacon; your Quinquennial Inspector (QI); the Diocese of London's Care of Churches Team (020 7932 1238); your insurance company; and the local authority.
- Keep an eye on flood warnings in your area. You can call Floodline twenty four hours a day on 0845 988 1188 or see <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/flood/floodwarning/Thames.html> for up-to-date information.

### **Action to take once a flood warning has been issued**

If a flood warning has been issued, which is likely to affect your church and/or its ancillary buildings, here are some basic steps that you should take with immediate action.

#### Gas, electricity and water

- Put plugs into sinks and weigh them down with something heavy.

- Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies at the mains. Find out where these are in advance of any flood.
- Unplug all electrical items and store as high up as possible or away from the area at risk of flooding.

#### Reduce flood water getting into your Church

- Ideally, cover doors, windows and airbricks with plywood, sandbags or metal sheeting. The Diocese of London's Care of Churches Team can advise on possible sources of sandbags.

Sometimes it will not be possible to prevent water ingress, in which case the steps below should be taken to limit the damage that is done.

#### Valuable Items

- Keep important parish documents or valuables in a sealed bag, and in a location safe from floodwater.
- If you have any movable furnishings which are of particular value and/or significance, again ensure they are in a place safe from floodwater.

#### Furnishings and appliances

- Move as much furniture and as many electrical items as you can away from the area of flooding, or raise them up on bricks or blocks.
- Relocate moveable furniture away from walls, as this helps when drying the building later.
- If you can, roll up carpets and rugs and put them somewhere away from the area at risk.
- Leave internal doors open.

### **In the event of flooding to your Church and/or its ancillary buildings.**

1. If on site, raise the alarm and leave the site, ensuring that no-one else is in or around the building(s). Stay safe during a flood, and try to avoid contact with floodwater.
2. Contact the emergency services on 999 or 112. Work with the police, fire and rescue services and the Environment Agency (0845 988 1188) to co-ordinate the response during flooding.
3. If utilities are affected contact the supplier.  
For gas, call National Grid: 0800 111 999  
For water, call Thames Water: 08459 200800  
For electricity, call your building's supplier.
4. If possible, ensure there is clear access for emergency vehicles.
5. Contact your Archdeacon.
6. Contact your Quinquennial Inspector (QI).

7. Contact the Diocese of London Care of Churches Team on (020) 7932 1230.
8. Contact your insurance company.
9. Contact the local authority.

**Care of Churches Team**  
**Diocese of London**  
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