
Report To:	Planning and Environment	Date:	10 th November 2025
Contact Officer:	Paula Harrison		
Subject:	ENVIRONMENT AGENCY FLOOD RISK		

1. **Purpose**

- 1.1 To note the circulation of a letter from the Environment Agency regarding flood risks

2. **Background**

- 2.1 The Environment Agency has sent a letter to the Council sharing information that it will be contacting a number of households in West Swindon regarding their flood risk.
A copy of the letter is below. The Parish Council has not received any further detail about either stage of the initiative.

3. **Details**

- 3.1 Dear West Swindon Parish Council,
I am a Flood Resilience Engagement Advisor with the Environment Agency.
Together with partners from Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire and Swindon Prepared, I am working on an initiative called Floodwise Swindon. I'm writing to tell you about the project and how your Parish council may be able to support it.
What is Floodwise Swindon?
Floodwise Swindon is a multi-layered programme designed to improve flood resilience across Swindon and reduce flood risk. It has two parts:
- Part 1: Raising awareness of flood risk in Swindon.
 - Part 2: Engaging communities to improve resilience and reduce flood risk.
- Why is this project necessary?
Parts of Swindon face significant flood risk. We believe that about 1500 homes are at high risk of flooding from rivers or surface water. Many others are also at medium risk. Swindon is unusual in that the homes at risk are spread across the whole town rather than focussed in one particular area.
I have identified about 175 households at high risk in West Swindon Parish Council's area, mostly from surface water flooding. I have written to all these addresses. The letters will arrive on the 5th November.
Your town's rivers and drainage systems manage routine rainfall well. However, as seen in 2023, they cannot cope with extreme or prolonged

rainfall. With climate change making such weather more likely, flood events are expected to increase.

The Environment Agency has strategic responsibility for river flooding. Swindon Borough Council is responsible for surface water flooding—also known as flash flooding. There is a close link between the two, hence partnership working between the Environment Agency and Swindon Borough Council.

How will the project raise awareness?

Part 1 of Floodwise Swindon involves writing to all households identified as being at high flood risk, using publicly available data. These letters will highlight individual flood risks and signpost residents to a range of online support.

This campaign introduces residents to Floodwise Swindon and its aims.

What will Part 2 involve?

Part 2 will focus on community resilience:

- Wiltshire and Swindon Prepared will lead Flood Warden recruitment and training.
- The Environment Agency and partners will aim to develop community partnerships. These can reduce flood risk and improve resident's ability to prepare for and respond to flooding incidents. We hope that Parish Councils will play a key role in this.

What role can Parish Councils and residents play?

Parish councils and their residents have the best understanding of their local areas. I am aware that there are already numerous local projects to improve the environment. There is a close link between reducing flood risk and improving the natural environment.

We hope that Parish Councils will embrace the idea that small actions—taken by individuals and communities—can reduce flood risk. Every litre of water that doesn't enter a river helps. Every leaf or piece of litter kept out of drains contributes. Every avoided toilet flush of non-biodegradable waste makes a difference. And every rain garden, water butt or planter reduces flood risk during a period of heavy rain.

What is being done now?

Both the Environment Agency and Swindon Borough Council are actively exploring options to reduce flood risk. While structural work is often slow and costly, I hope that Floodwise Swindon will complement these efforts by raising awareness, supporting proactive action and strengthening existing community networks. It is not intended as an alternative.

What's next?

Phase 1 of Floodwise Swindon is ongoing. Phase 2 will follow and be reviewed after 18 months.

Want to learn more?

You're welcome to contact me via email at fim.wal@environment-agency.gov.uk

Yours faithfully

Mat

Mathew Lloyd

Flood Resilience Engagement Advisor.

4. Financial and Budget Considerations

- 4.1 There are no costs associated with this project.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 That this Committee notes the report.