What to do after flooding

The following information and more can be found on www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/flooding-recovery

Key contact numbers

- If you are, or know of, a vulnerable resident who needs assistance – **0300 300 8500**
- If you require urgent Adult Social Care assistance – **0300 300 8303** (in hours) or **0300 300 8123** (out of hours)
- If you have been made homeless or need housing advice – **0300 300 4370**
- If you are a Council house tenant and have property damage – **0800 074 0263**
- If you need practical help from volunteers in cleaning up – **0300 300 8500**
- If you need to report an urgent problem with a road, gully, drain, or fallen tree **– 0300 300 8049** (This line may be very busy. In case of danger to life or injury, contact the Fire Service **– 999**). Non-urgent issues can be reported through the FixMyStreet app or our website.
- If your road has significant mud, silt or debris that requires removal – **0300 300 8500**
- For a sewerage related issues you need to contact your Water Provider, in Central Bedfordshire this will usually be Anglian Water - **03457 145 145**

Let us know that you've been flooded

Please let us know if you, or someone you know, has been flooded. This helps us understand how many residents have been impacted by flooding and how badly. Email as much detail as possible to floodrisk@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk. If you cannot email, call **0300 300 8500**.

Emotional support

Experiencing flooding can be stressful and upsetting. It's important to look after your wellbeing.

- **Samaritans** (www.samaritans.org) are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year: **116 123**
- **MIND-BLMK** is a local mental health charity: **0300 330 0648**, hq@mind-blmk.org.uk
- **Shout** is a free, confidential text service for those struggling to cope. Text 'SHOUT' to **85258** (24/7)

Be prepared

If your property has flooded at least once, then it could happen again.

- Check for the latest flood alerts in the area on the Government website https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/
- Take action to help protect your property for the future: www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding
- FloodRe (www.floodre.co.uk) addresses the challenges faced by homeowners in high-risk flood areas, working with insurers to assist more properties to be protected.

Practical steps to take after flooding

1. **Ensure safety before returning to your property**

Before entering your property, confirm with emergency services that it is safe to return. Flood water can hide dangers like contaminated water, structural issues, or electrical hazards. Contact a qualified electrician or gas engineer to check the safety of electricity and gas before use. Contact your water provider if you experience sewage flooding in your property.

2. **Contact your insurance company**

Get in touch with your insurer as soon as possible to report the flood and follow their advice. Most insurers have a 24-hour helpline. Do not throw away damaged goods until your insurer has authorised you to do so. If you're renting, inform your landlord immediately and contact your contents insurance provider to discuss the next steps.

3. **Handle property clean-up safely**

When cleaning your property, always wear protective gloves and clothing – especially when handling any remaining floodwater or items that have come into contact with floodwater. Use masks as necessary and follow guidelines from local authorities and waste management services when disposing of damaged items. Call the Council's helpline if you need practical help cleaning up (**T. 0300 300 8500**).

4. **Record and manage damage**

Take detailed photographs and/or videos of all damage and create a list of affected belongings. Keep documentation of all communications with insurance company, repair professionals, and disposal actions.

5. **Dispose of contaminated food**

Dispose of any food that has been in contact with floodwater, even if tinned, packaged or defrosted.

6. **Ventilate your property**

After ensuring it is safe to enter, ventilate your property to help dry it out, keeping security in mind.

7. **Watch out for fraudulent contractors**

During challenging times, unscrupulous builders and traders may offer their services. Ensure that any contractor provides a written quotation on letter-headed paper with a landline contact number and address. Further advice is on our website.

8. **Further information**

For more in-depth information on flood recovery, including safety, waste disposal, and dealing with insurers, visit the National Flood Forum: https://nationalfloodforum.org.uk/about-flooding/recovering/what-should-i-do/