

Briefing note: Flooding in Sydling St Nicholas

February 2025

This note describes Sydling St Nicholas's flood history, the work we and our partners at Dorset Council have undertaken and advice on what you can do to build resiliency in a flood event.

Sydling St Nicholas flood history

Sydling St Nicholas has a history of flooding, with the most significant recent event on 31st October 2021.

Flooding in Sydling St Nicholas is a very complex issue. The geography of Sydling St Nicholas makes it vulnerable to flooding from a variety of sources. The location of the village in a steep sided valley results in fast run off from the surrounding fields, resulting in flooding from main river and surface water. The main river of Sydling Water has a complex flow arrangement through the village, with many privately owned historic structures in the channel. Sydling St Nicholas is also vulnerable to groundwater flooding due to the chalk geology. When high rainfall and high groundwater combine, water can often be seen flowing down the road. The road is also the historic route of Sydling Water.

How is the Environment Agency working to manage the flood risk in Sydling St Nicholas?

Following the flooding experienced in October 2021, the Environment Agency has prioritised the delivery of Property Flood Resilience (PFR) to properties impacted within Sydling St Nicholas. This investment of over £250,000 provided homeowners with flood protection measures such as flood boards and pumps. This project is now in the final stages, with the successful installation of resilience measures at over 25 properties. Once installations are complete, an engagement event is planned which will see wet testing of the PFR and a drop in session held at the village hall. We estimate this to take place in Spring 2025. Bespoke flood action guides for Sydling St Nicholas are being prepared to advise residents regarding the deployment of PFR. Environment Agency staff will also be on hand to answer any questions regarding PFR.

The Environment Agency is also looking to start computer hydraulic modelling work on the main river of Sydling Water in 2026. The outputs from this will help to better understand flow arrangements of the river within the village.

The Environment Agency and our partners at Dorset Council continue to explore Natural Flood Management options within the catchment.



Floodline 0345 988 1188

Incident Hotline 0800 80 70 60

How is Dorset Council now working to reduce the flood risk in Sydling St Nicholas?

Dorset Council Highways team have cleared out the watercourse in the vicinity of Lamperts Farm, Dorchester Road as a goodwill gesture. They have also enlarged two highway gully's in the High Street.

Understanding your watercourse as a riparian owner

Where a watercourse runs adjacent to or through your land you will be what is termed a 'riparian landowner'. Please visit <http://engageenvironmentagency.uk.engagementhq.com/your-watercourse-rights-and-roles> where you can access guidance to clarify your roles and responsibilities, and how these are shared between riparian landowners and other organisations such as the Environment Agency, lead local flood authorities, councils, and water companies.

There is also useful guidance on how to maintain your watercourse and permitting of works. You can also find advice on how to work with others to reduce flood risk and protect and enhance the natural environment of our rivers and streams.



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What can you do?

Flooding is a natural occurrence and we cannot eliminate the risk of all flooding; our [National Flood Risk Strategy](#) calls for the nation to embrace a broad range of resilience actions where there is a risk. In all locations we would initially advise individuals and communities to:

- Check your current and long-term risk here [Check the long term flood risk for an area in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Look at the advice on preparing for flooding at [Prepare for flooding: Protect yourself from future flooding - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Sign up to receive any flood alerts and flood warnings for your local area here [Sign up for flood warnings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Write a personal, community or business flood plan, so you know what to do when flooding is forecast for Sydling St Nicholas [Prepare for flooding: Protect yourself from future flooding - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- You can check river and sea levels in England [Find river, sea, groundwater and rainfall levels - GOV.UK \(check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- Visit the Met Office website www.metoffice.gov.uk or download their App for local forecasts and weather warnings

If you have any further queries, please contact us at:
wessexenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk



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