APPENDIX 1 - COMMUNITY FLOOD PLAN

Sampford Brett Parish Council

Community Flood Plan

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NOTE: This is an Appendix to the Community Emergency Plan which carries more details on the overview of emergencies and how they should be handled. There is also an Appendix 2, the Emergency Communication Plan.

1. Background:

Sampford Brett is a community of about 288 (in 2021) people located near Williton in West Somerset. The Doniford Stream (classified as a main river by the Environment Agency) runs south to north on the eastern edge of the main community. There is also an unnamed stream running west to east along one side of the main street. See Fig. 1.

Flooding in the village is infrequent and normally very low impact, with no significant risk to life. It is normally **surface water flooding,** also known as **flash flooding**. The last significant event was on August 16th, 2022. Prior to that a similar event happened in 2013. The impact is small amounts of flood water entering a few houses in the village, typically to less than 10cm depth. On the roads the water reached about 40cm in places in the 2022 event. Most of the affected houses have now become more flood resilient and resistant. In 1993, the impact of these events was reduced by the construction of a flood alleviation storm overflow drain beneath the main street, the village hall road, the car park and into the Doniford Stream. The pipe is 1.2m in diameter. See Fig. 1.

River flooding of the Doniford Stream can occur. Historically, most of the water has flooded the fields to the east of the river, away from the main part of the community.

Surface water flooding in particular can occur when the ground is impermeable due to being dry and hard or waterlogged or frozen. These conditions when accompanied by intense rainfall can lead to surface water run-off and result in flooding. This can be exacerbated by drains blocking or overflowing and run off from roofing, with guttering not coping with the volumes of water. These conditions are likely to become more frequent with climate change leading to longer dry spells and more frequent periods of intense rainfall.

Stream Level Gauges: In June 2023, two early warning telemetry gauges were installed by the Environment Agency on the stream running beside the main street to constantly monitor the water level and trigger alerts at predetermined levels. See Fig. 1. These send message and email alerts to key individuals when set levels are triggered by the stream level rising and falling. There is also a gauge on the Doniford Stream located just north of the A358 (called ‘Doniford Stream at Sampford Brett’) and these data can be accessed live online.

2. Community Emergency Response Volunteers & Sharing Personal Data:

The Emergency Response Coordinator (a Parish Councillor), formerly known as the Emergency Response Coordinator, and the community emergency response volunteers will likely be the first people on site when a flood event occurs or is expected to occur. They may be required to provide an all-important, initial level of support and a first response until local authority or emergency services support is available and takes a lead on operations (if the event is serious enough for them to be contacted to attend). Because of the need to quickly contact each other in the event of an emergency, the volunteers have each signed a document allowing their personal contact data to be shared between the volunteers and the Emergency Response Coordinator. This means that any volunteer can contact all other volunteers and parish councillors by phone, email or a designated WhatsApp group in the knowledge that they have agreed for their personal data to be used in this way. These completed and signed forms are held by the Clerk to the Parish Council. Volunteers will renew permission for their data to be stored and used on an annual basis. They can rescind this at any time by contacting the Emergency Response Coordinator. The volunteers are listed in Table 1.

Fig. 1: Main Surface Water Flood Features in the community

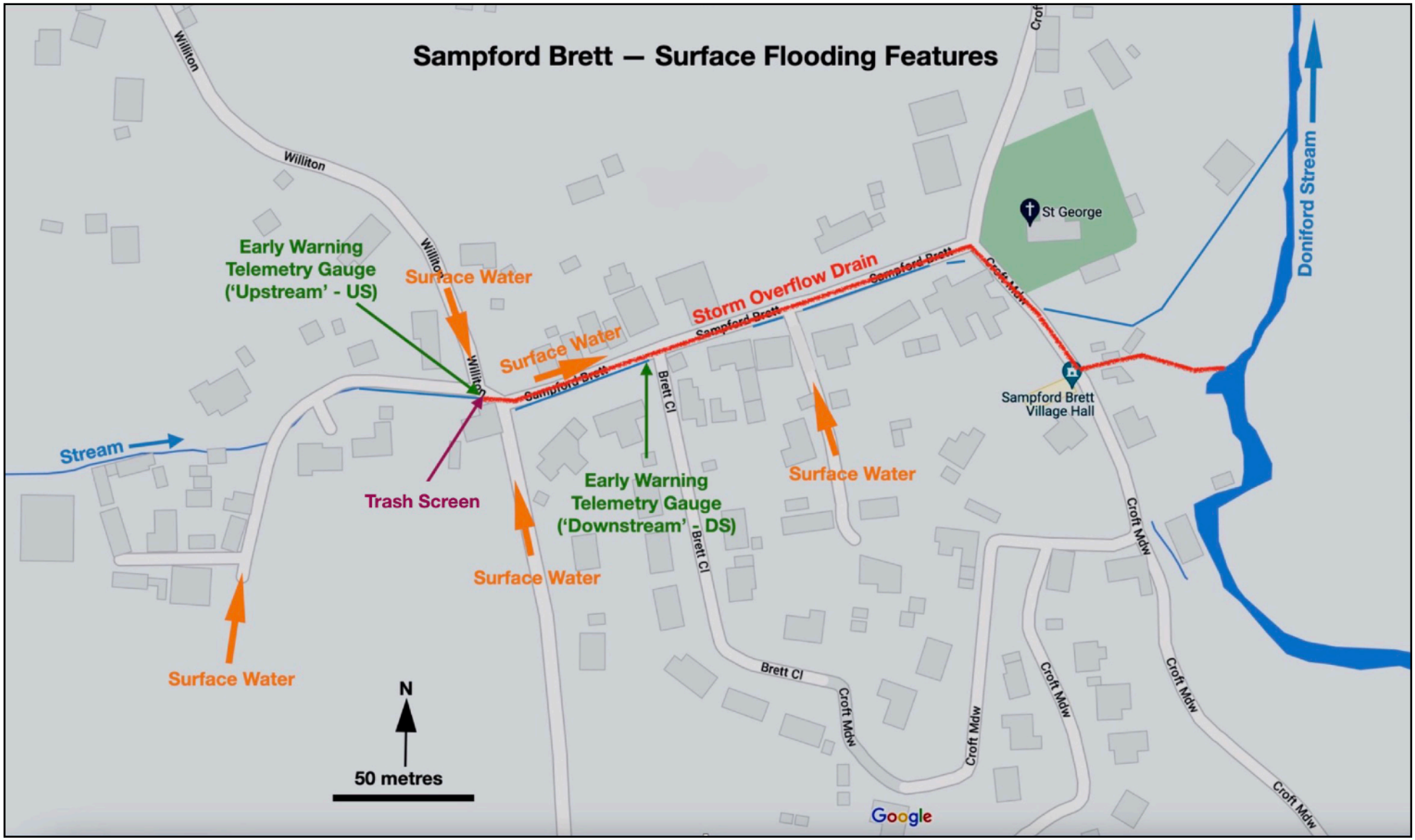

Table 1: List of Flood Response Volunteers with Contact Details [only available to Parish Councillors & Flood Response Volunteers]

Name	Address	Mobile/Landline	Email

We currently have 21 emergency response volunteers.

3. What are the TRIGGER SIGNS for a flood alert?

The Emergency Response Coordinator and all volunteers should monitor the weather forecast for wet weather warnings.

Additional trigger signs might be:

- Warnings from the telemetry gauges on the stream beside the main street
- Warning from the Environment Agency Flood Line
- Alert from a member of the community or nearby community
- Direct observation of rising water levels, water flowing on roads, large puddle build ups, etc.

Alerts can be divided into 3 levels:

- Flooding is possible, be prepared.
- Flooding is expected, take action.
- Severe flooding is expected, risk to life.

4. What ACTIONS must take place as soon as possible when flooding is imminent or has started?

- The Emergency Response Coordinator and the response volunteers have all the contact phone numbers and addresses of all volunteers
- If the conditions look like they might lead to flooding then one of the volunteers or the Emergency Response Coordinator will send a message on the WhatsApp flood response volunteer group and/or by phone or knocking on doors.
- Any one of the volunteers can trigger an alert. Do not wait for the Emergency Response Coordinator to act, as they might be away from the community (a long absence should be notified to the other volunteers).
- Cascade the alert to all other volunteers as quickly as possible.

- If there is time, check and prepare the flood response equipment, and distribute it as deemed necessary.
- Prioritise vulnerable people & properties. Alert them as soon as possible. Known vulnerable properties are listed in Table 2.
- Check drains, culverts, gulleys, trash screen (storm grid), etc. if there is time.
- Distribute flood response equipment (located in the shed in the village hall car park - see Section 7). Any volunteer can access the flood response equipment as soon as required. There may be a need to prioritise certain equipment in certain locations - where possible this will be the decision of the Emergency Response Coordinator.

4.1 Actions for People and Properties at Risk of Flood:

- Ensure the safety of residents as a priority - but not by risking your own safety (see Section 6)
- Put flood boards or sand bags in place (or the sandless equivalent)
- Take up rugs on ground floor where possible
- Raise furniture where possible (or protect the feet of chairs and tables)
- Lift floor length curtains over the curtain rails
- Remove electrical items that are at or near floor level
- Evaluate the need to turn off electricity, water and gas supplies
- Put important documents in plastic bags and move to safety

4.2 Evacuation Centre:

It may be necessary to evacuate some residents if conditions are particularly bad. Evaluate whether evacuation is required on a case by case basis. Our options are limited in this community, but St Georges Church is the best location for an evacuation centre (note that the village hall may not be an option as it might not be easily accessible due to flood water - the deepest water in the 2022 flood event was outside the village hall).

4.3 Who does what, where and when?
The Emergency Response Coordinator, if available, will guide operations. If not, it will be the nominated lead volunteer, or one agreed at the time of the event if some key individuals are not available. They will try to ensure that response efforts, in terms of personnel and equipment, are prioritised where most urgent, based firstly on risk to life or health and secondly, risk to property. Work in pairs where possible.

Throughout the year volunteers and all other parishioners are encouraged to monitor the state of the stream and river. This vigilance includes a visual inspection of road drains, culverts and the trash screens (storm grids). Residents are also encouraged to ensure that gutters and drains around their buildings are clear and in good order. The location of key road drains that might be hidden under dirty flood water are marked by a white triangle on the adjacent wall or on a post beside the drain. Blocked road drains should be reported to Somerset Council via their website, or reported to the Emergency Response Coordinator or any other parish councillor. Major blockages of the stream should be reported to Somerset

Council or the Environment Agency as appropriate, although it may be the responsibility of the adjacent property owner where riparian rights and responsibilities apply.

Table 2: List of Properties Vulnerable to Flooding [only available to Parish Councillors & Emergency Response Volunteers]

By prioritising the properties that have had flood issues in the past we will best focus our flood response efforts and have a more effective outcome.

Address	Owner/Resident	Phone	Notes & Actions

5. CONTACT Information for Emergency Services, Authorities & Agencies:

Environment Agency Incident Flood Line:	**0800 80 70 60**
Environment Agency contact for Flood Warnings & Alerts:	**0345 988 1188 (voice)** **0345 602 6340 (text)** **@EnvAgency (Instagram)** **#floodaware (Twitter)**
Somerset Council/Somerset Rivers Authority:	**07825 054667 - Dr Paul Elliston, Community Engagement Officer (Flooding)** **07977 411143 - Dr Bel Deering, Community Engagement Officer (Flooding)**
National Grid Emergency Helpline:	**105 or 0800 40 40 90**
Wessex Water, in the event of sewage contamination:	**0345 600 4600 (24 hours)**

Alert emergency services (999) if necessary:

- This should be done by the lead person on the ground (the Emergency Response Coordinator if available, or a lead volunteer).

- The Emergency Response Coordinator or lead volunteer on the ground should be the main point of liaison with the emergency when they are here. They should provide the emergency services with local knowledge.

- Follow the guidance of the emergency professionals at all times.

Other emergency agency phone numbers are given in the Community Emergency Plan.

6. SAFETY of Flood Response Volunteers:

6.1 Hazards:

- Volunteers should NOT take risks. Don't get into dangerous situations - these are for the emergency professionals.
- Prioritise your own safety and the safety of others at all times. Volunteers should work in pairs if possible.
- Save people first and ensure that all children are accounted for
- Ensure where possible that essential medication accompanies people if they are evacuated
- Check for pets
- Do NOT enter watercourses or culverts when in flood
- Even shallow water can be dangerous
- Beware of submerged hazards (logs, rocks, hidden curbs, steps, verges, dislodged manhole covers, etc.)
- Carry a stout stick if possible to probe for hidden hazards
- Structures such as bridges and pathways over streams can become unsafe or hidden by muddy water.
- After a flood, surfaces can be very slippery. Sturdy footwear is ideal.
- Be alert for signs of hypothermia in yourself and others.

6.2 Dangers of Contaminated Water:

- Dirty water and wet ground can conduct electricity
- Turn off power before touching electrical equipment
- If you suspect a gas leak don't light a match. If possible turn off the gas and open windows. Report the leak when safe to do so.
- CONTAMINATION may come from sewage, agricultural chemicals and animal waste
- Protect your hands with gloves (water proof medical gloves are available in the flood response equipment store)

- Wash your hands afterwards, especially before handling food and drink.
- Wash all equipment afterwards.
- Items used but not cleanable must be disposed of appropriately.

7. Community Flood/Emergency Response EQUIPMENT

A flood/emergency equipment shed is located behind the garage in the car park opposite the village hall. It has a combination lock number: XXXX *(available to Emergency Response Volunteers and parish councillors)*. The shed and contents (Table 3) were put in place in May 2023 following a grant from Somerset Prepared plus some funds from the Parish Council.

Table 3: List of Flood/Emergency Response Equipment Stored in the Dedicated Shed

Item	Number
Sandless sandbags - Flood Sax (with scissors)	40
Tarpaulin (2m x 2m) to use with sandless sandbags	4
Large flat shovels	2
Heavy duty yard brushes	3
Extra wide heavy duty yard bushes	3
Wheelbarrow	1
Buckets	5
Dirty water pump	2
Hoses for dirty water pumps (20m flat and 10m ribbed)	2
Lantern torches	4
Head torches	4
Hard hats	6
Fluorescent bibs	10
Emergency space blankets	10
Medical Gloves	500
Wellington boots	3 pairs

Item	Number
First Aid Kit	1

8. What to do AFTER the flood event:

8.1 Stand Down & Recovery:

- *How do we know when the emergency is over?* Firstly, everyone is safe and accounted for and the threat of flood is over or receding, or the power outage is over, or the freeze spell has ended, etc.
- *What do we do at the end of an incident?* Notify vulnerable people and all volunteers. Ensure vulnerable parishioners are safe and able to cope..

8.2 Clean Up:

- Get the flood response volunteers and as many of the community as possible to help clean up and dry out affected properties, furniture, roads, paths, etc.
- Clean the flood response equipment before returning it in the shed.
- Items used but not cleanable must be disposed of appropriately (sandless sandbags can go into the skip for waste designated for incineration, but in the past we have been able to reuse these at least one more time).
- Note what items need replenishing or replacing, such as sandless sandbags.

8.3 Lessons Learned:

Following the flood event, it is important to debrief everyone involved as to whether procedures worked, what went well and what needs to be done better or differently and whether the equipment was adequate and whether additional equipment is required.

A report will be written up by the Emergency Response Coordinator and presented to the Parish Council. This will include any recommendations for changes to the Emergency Flood Plan including procedures and equipment needing to be upgraded, replenished or added.

8.4 Emergency Services, Authorities and Utility Companies:

If any of the these were involved, ensure that you get their feedback on how everything went, including actions taken and liaison with the community.

9. Making the Community more Flood RESISTANT & RESILIENT

9.1 Flood Resistance:
This means aiming to keep water out of a property or minimise the amount entering. This can include:

- **Flood gates**. Door & window barriers which can slide into place into runners. They can be permanent or temporary.
- **Flood proof doors.** These are purpose-built doors with seals.
- **Portable or sump pumps.** Dirty water pumps to remove flood water.
- **Self-closing air bricks or air bricks covers**. These can be bought, or use aluminium tape as a temporary solution.
- **Non-return valves.** Stop dirty/sewage water from coming into the property via pipework or waste systems.

9.2 Flood Resilience:
This means aiming to make recovery faster and easier. This can include:

- **Tanking.** Sealing walls so that the are more flood resilient.
- **Raised electrics.** Sockets and switches should be above any anticipated flood level.
- **Water resilient flooring.** This might be ceramic tiles or vinyl rather than carpets.
- **Flood resilient design.** e.g. raised boilers and appliances
- **Flood resilient kitchens/cupboards**. e.g. stainless steel
- **Storage of valuables, including important paperwork above flood level.**

10. Review of this Community Flood Plan

This Community Flood Plan will be reviewed annually by the Emergency Response Sub-Committee of the Parish Council, or as soon as possible after a new flood event. Any significant changes and recommendations will be put to the Parish Council for approval