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“Following a Major Emergency”  
of help.

# RESPONDING TO THE RISK OF FLOODING

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## **Introduction**

Floods happen quickly and often without warning. You cannot stop flooding and climate change means we may have more frequent flash flooding in the future. And more properties each year are affected by floods than by fire.

This leaflet explains a little about SHAL's response to flooding and what tenants can do to reduce risks to themselves and their possessions.

Many of SHAL's properties are in low-lying areas, but situated behind robust flood defence arrangements. For instance, a large part of Bridgwater is in exactly this position. A few of SHAL's properties are in areas which are more vulnerable and those tenants have been advised of the higher level of risk.

## **Are you concerned about flooding?**

Further information is available from the Environment Agency (www.environment.agency.gov.uk) on 0845 988 1188. You can ask to receive free 24 hour floodline warnings.

An extremely useful checklist of things to do is available from the Environment Agency (entitled "Preparing for a flood") free of charge at www.environment-

agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/38325.aspx or by telephoning 0845 988 1188.

Home contents insurance is not included as part of SHAL's rent and all tenants are advised to ensure this is in place. There are many local and on-line organisations qualified to advise on this important issue.

You are advised to create a personal stockpile of supplies that might be useful in an emergency, for example tools, blankets, food, water and clothing.

You are also advised to make up a flood kit, including:-

- insurance policy for home contents
- personal documents
- emergency contact numbers including the floodline on 0845 988 1188
- torch
- radio
- mobile phone (charged!)
- rubber gloves
- antibacterial hand gel
- first aid kit

## **Contacting SHAL**

You can telephone SHAL during office hours on 01278 444344. Or in an emergency during evenings and weekends use 07050 646841.

We have information available on our website at www.shal.org.

If your home is flooded and you cannot live in it, our insurance policy will cover the rent. The local council will provide you with temporary accommodation. You must let us know where you are and if you will wish to return to your home after repairs.

If you want to move permanently we will help you with your Homefinder Somerset application, if you wish.

Once you have left your home we will change the locks to keep the property safe.

## **Safety**

Please bear in mind that you must:-

- avoid direct contact with flood water as much as possible
- wash hands
- wear waterproof plasters
- not eat food touched by flood water
- note that 150mm (6 inches) of fast flowing water can knock an adult off their feet
- note that a car can float in 600mm (2 feet) of water
- note that flood water can hide dangers - like missing manhole covers