



## **Ballater Flood Bulletin No 8: Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

### **1. Dates for your diary**

**Ballater Flood Public Information Meeting:** Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 7.00 – 9.00pm, at V&A Halls, Ballater: The meeting is being organised by Ballater & Crathie Community Council and aims to update the community on the issues covered at the last public meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> February. Representatives from SEPA and Aberdeenshire Council will provide an update on flood defences and the Ballater Recovery Plan. The Ballater Community Resilience Group will also provide an update on the Community Resilience Plan. **Please note that numbers of people attending will be limited to 200 on a first come first served basis to conform with the insurance conditions of the hall complex.**

**Ballater Flood Volunteers Open Day, Flood Protection Products Exhibition and Ballater Old Station Public Consultation:** This multiple event will be held in V&A Halls Ballater on 2<sup>nd</sup> April from 10.30 -3.30 pm. Come and find out how you can volunteer (with the River bank clean up, the Flood Relief Distribution Centre and the Emergency Resilience Plan), see the different types of flood protection products that are available for your house/business and see the new designs for the Old Station and have your say.

### **2. Updates**

**Funds collected and distributed for flood relief:** Various organisations have been working extremely hard to collect and distribute funds to those affected by the flooding in Ballater and the surrounding area. The figures that they have provided this week are:

- **The Charitable Chiels** have raised over £85,000 from their combined fundraising (Just Giving/Crowd Funding page online and cheques, cash and bank transfers that have come in from right across the globe). Over £40,000 has been paid out to date and they have assisted 100 households. Their fundraising continues as does their hands on approach to assisting people.
- **Rev. David Barr and Rev. Vittoria Hancock** have distributed over £21,650 through their Ballater Flood Fund.
- **The Rotary Club of Aboyne and Upper Deeside** through their Ballater and Deeside Flood Relief Fund have raised £42,785, of which £31,900 has been distributed to 71 households in Aboyne, Kincardine O'Neil, Dinnet, Finzean and Ballater. Requests for help are still coming in.
- **Foundation Scotland** have so far distributed 165 grants to individuals in Aberdeenshire totalling £149,215, of which 67 were in Ballater, receiving awards totalling £61,955.

In addition to the funds above, the **Scottish Government Relief Fund** is administered by Aberdeenshire Council. As of today, throughout Aberdeenshire 797 households have received the domestic grant of £1500 or a share thereof, totalling £1,195,500. As of 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 107 businesses had received the £1500 grants (totalling £160,500) and 32 had received the £3000 grant (totalling £96,000), a total of £256,500.

### 3. Advice and drop-ins

**Aberdeenshire Council Ballater Flood Response Team:** The flood response team are located in **Ballater Library Weds only from 10-5pm** and are able to provide advice with flood related issues and signposting to further assistance Tel: 07342085698 (above hours only). At all other times please call Marr Area Office for advice and signposting Tel: 01975 564803 or email: [marr@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:marr@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

**FREE Advice Drop In at the Library:** Please see details below of advice drop-in sessions for Ballater residents and businesses affected by the flood on Saturday mornings in the Library on 12th, 19th and 26th March (10-midday):

- Alan Nicoll from Laurie & Co Solicitors LLP will give his time freely to assist Ballater residents in dealing with insurance issues arising from the flood.
- Michael Rasmussen, Architect. DA FRIAS RIBA. Michael is a chartered architect and can offer advice on buildings – if they are damaged & need to be fully or partly re-built, building contracts, contractors, planning & building warrants (if relevant) etc. Those unable to attend can call Michael on his mobile for advice. Tel: 07968 19688 or email: [mike@rasarc.com](mailto:mike@rasarc.com)
- David Cobban, McCue & Porter, Chartered Quantity Surveyors will be able to provide advice on 26th March (and possibly 12th March). David lives in Ballater. If you are unable to attend but would like advice please phone Tel (01224) 326122, Mob 07917 186622 or email: [dgc@mccueporter.com](mailto:dgc@mccueporter.com)

**Scottish Flood Forum:** Paul Hendy from the Scottish Flood Forum will continue to run an advice drop in centre in Ballater Library every Wednesday from 10 - 5pm, he will do most property visits on Thursday mornings. This is an opportunity to get expert advice and support regarding insurance claims, drying out properties, property repairs and any other questions related to flooding and its impacts. Paul can be contacted by phone 07747702299 (if he is unable to answer send a text with your number and he will call you back) or email [paul@scottishfloodforum.org](mailto:paul@scottishfloodforum.org). Due to the numbers of people asking for his advice, an **appointment system** has been established so please contact the Library staff to book an appointment on Wednesdays with Paul, either by popping into the Library or call on 013397 55628. They will of course squeeze folk in between appointments if necessary but you may have to wait some time.

**Deeside Inn Pop-in:** Running on alternate Thursdays from 10.30 -12pm, the Deeside Inn will provide free tea and coffee to all affected by the recent events in the community, whether flooded or not. So join us while we chat, talk, and support each other. If you want some space to offload, to exchange ideas, or just to escape out of your house for a while, please come along. While this isn't a church event, either David Barr or Vittoria Hancock hope to be around most weeks. The dates for this month are 10th March and 24th March.

**Glen Muick Church Hall Get Together:** On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March Glen Muick Church Hall will be open for a get-together between 3 and 5pm. Hot drinks; paperbacks to take away; games; magazines are all on offer. A chance to GORN then GRIN. We hope everyone will leave with a smile. If the afternoon proves helpful then it will be repeated.

**Aberdeenshire Council Planning Surgery:** Aberdeenshire Council Planning Officers will be available to discuss flood related planning issues with residents at the Cairngorms National Park Office in Station Square, Ballater on the following dates. If your query cannot wait until then, please call 01569 768300 to get advice. This service will also be available via the existing surgery dates planned for Huntly, Alford and Aboyne and Banchory - call 01569 768300 for more information.

- Weds 16th March: Ballater Surgery 2- 4pm
- Weds 23rd March: Ballater Surgery 2- 4pm

**Help with completing forms:** Anyone needing assistance with filling in grant application or any other forms can ask the Ballater Flood Response Team in the Library, contact Susan McGregor, Aberdeenshire Council Community Learning and Development on Tel: 013398 86222 or Mob: 07827982250 to arrange assistance from a volunteer or contact the Citizens Advice Bureau (see below for more details).

**South West Aberdeenshire Citizens Advice Bureau:** The CAB have an outreach in Ballater at the Beaton/Craigie Room in the V&A Halls on 1st and 3rd Wednesdays each month BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. Please call Tel: 01224 747714 or email: [enquiries@westhillcab.casonline.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@westhillcab.casonline.org.uk) to book an appointment. The CAB provide advice on benefits, debt and money advice, work-related problems, consumer issues, relationships and housing. They also have specialist workers in Debt, Benefits, Pensions Guidance, Money Advice and Energy who will be pleased to guide you through more complex problems. In addition, they can provide support with filling in grant application or other forms (including those related to the flood).

**FREE consultation & therapy session available for stress reduction & relaxation:** Michele is offering this service for those affected by the recent floods in the Deeside area who are in need of support. The following Wellbeing Therapies will be available by referral or appointment (Aromatherapy Massage, Holistic Massage, Reiki Healing, Relaxation Techniques). Available at the CLAN Centre in Ballater on Tuesday or Thursday alternate weeks, from Thursday 18th Feb to Thursday 31st March 10 - 4pm. For further information, dates available or to book an appointment please contact 01339881499 / [mishamog@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mishamog@yahoo.co.uk)

**Ballater Flood Relief Distribution Centre:** They are operating out of the Church Street Car Park and will be open every Tues 10 am - 3 pm. For more details please contact Gillie Inglis on 07464435231. Anyone affected by flooding whether insured or not is encouraged to make use of this resource. Items distributed so far include sofas, beds, TVs, small kitchen appliances, crockery, cutlery, utensils, bedding and duvets, clothes – shoes, boots coats and jackets, pots and pans, food, furniture, baby items, new toiletries, socks and pants (for both children and adults), cleaning products and overalls etc.

**Volunteers:** Anyone wishing to volunteer please contact one of the following:

- Gillie Inglis – 07464 435231 – to volunteer for Ballater Flood Relief Distribution Centre and via Hope Floats facebook page
- Calum Hislop, River Officer – [calum@riverdee.org](mailto:calum@riverdee.org) The River Dee Trust and Board are organising River Dee Bank Clear Up Days in Feb, March and April, please email Calum to volunteer

**Library Opening Hours:** Weeks Commencing Monday 7th and 14th March 2016: Any queries please call Sabine Muir on 013397 55628 or [ballater.library@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:ballater.library@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

|           |                             |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Monday    | CLOSED                      |
| Tuesday   | 10 am - 1 pm 6:30 – 8.00 pm |
| Wednesday | 10 am - 5 pm                |
| Thursday  | 2 - 4 pm 6:30 – 8.00 pm     |
| Friday    | 2 - 5 pm                    |
| Saturday  | 10 am - 12 pm               |

#### 4. Sources of funding

**Scottish Government Grant:** Each flooded household will be entitled to a £1500 grant and businesses will be entitled to a £3000 grant. If you have not already done so you can apply direct online at: <https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/flooding-grant-scheme/>. Applications are being dealt with as swiftly as possible. Applications can also be accepted from owners whose static caravans were flooded in the recent storms.

**Ballater Charitable Chiels Flood Fund:** The Ballater Charitable Chiels continue to distribute funds to flooded households. The Charitable Chiels can be contacted on 07772668017 to make an appointment. They will also, depending on resources, be able to provide practical physical help with moving items from flood affected properties.

**The Rotary Club of Aboyne and Upper Deeside: Ballater and Deeside Flood Relief Fund:** The fund is available to provide assistance to the people and communities directly affected by the recent floods. Contact the Rotary by email: [audrotary1010@gmail.com](mailto:audrotary1010@gmail.com) or Tel: 07724 144 355.

**Ballater Flood Fund:** Rev. David Barr and Rev. Vittoria Hancock are distributing funds to those in need following the flood from their Ballater Flood Fund. If anyone is in need of assistance please approach Vittoria or David directly, David's Manse number is 01339756111 and Vittoria's Rectory number, it is 013397 55919.

**Foundation Scotland – Flood Recovery Appeal – Aberdeenshire Fund:** Financial support is available for (1) up to **£1000** for individuals or families who are suffering financial hardship as a result of the recent flooding and (2) up to **£10,000** for voluntary and community groups who are providing immediate relief to people, will be providing longer term community rebuilding projects, have experienced significant structural and or flood damage or **for groups responsible for ensuring prevention and community preparedness against future storm and flood damage** Further information can be found on their website: <https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/flood-recovery-appeal/apply-for-funding/> or contact the Grants Team on 0141 341 4960 or email [grants@foundationscotland.org.uk](mailto:grants@foundationscotland.org.uk)

## 5. Community groups involved in flood recovery

**Ballater Community Resilience Plan:** John Bolton is chairing the Ballater Community Resilience Group which is currently developing a Community Resilience Plan for Ballater. This short plan will be a self-help guide to assist the community in coping with any emergency, not just flooding, prior to the arrival of Emergency Services. Once the plan has been completed it will be accessible on the Ballater Community website. Volunteers will be required to take part in emergency situations within the scope of the plan and anyone interested in being involved should contact John on 07710 544804.

**Victoria and Albert Halls Committee, Ballater:** The Victoria and Albert Halls, Ballater, provides a rest centre in emergency situations where evacuation is necessary. They have reviewed their facilities in the light of the recent experiences, and have drawn up a draft plan for the future including the need to install a back-up power generation system. They have started fundraising and are ring-fencing money for this purpose. Anyone wishing to donate should contact Willie Meston, Treasurer Victoria and Albert Halls – [info@coilacriech.com](mailto:info@coilacriech.com) Tel. 013397 55377.

**Business Recovery Group:** A group has been set up which includes representatives from Ballater Business Association, Visit Royal Deeside, VisitScotland, Business in the Community Scotland, Aberdeenshire Council and Cairngorms National Park Authority. If your organisation would like to be involved please get in touch with Richard Watt, Chair Ballater Business Association or Morna Harper, Aberdeenshire Council Service Manager – Business and Communities on Tel: 01224 665218.

**Ballater Flood Group (BFG):** Established by Ballater residents in response to the December Flood, to identify changes and improvements needed in response to the flood and to reflect community opinions. To date it has investigated short term alleviation/protection from future flood events and community flood alerts/information systems (information to be fed into Community Resilience Plan). The BFG was appointed by and reports to the Community Council. Community input is welcome: please contact Tony Cox (Coordinator) 013397 55625. [coxscotland@btinternet.com](mailto:coxscotland@btinternet.com)

**Ballater Support Group:** A handful of Ballater ladies saw an urgent need to make sure that evacuees continue to feel supported, and do not begin to feel isolated. This is being addressed by trying to establish contact with a member of every household which has been affected by flooding, to see how they are bearing up; if their insurance company is treating them fairly; if they need volunteer help; and to pass on information about the sources of funding, professional help, and other donations available. Over 80% of flooded homes have had one visit, but, of course, many of the householders are not even able to visit their properties at the moment, far less live in them, so it's anticipated that many more visits will be necessary. If anyone feels able to pass on contact details of those who have been displaced that would be most welcome. Details can be left with Linda Drever on 013397 56224, or by email at [thedrevers@btinternet.com](mailto:thedrevers@btinternet.com) so that they can get in touch to reassure them that they have not been forgotten – it's not a case of out of sight, out of mind.

## 6. Information to be aware of

**Flood Protection Products:** Aberdeenshire Council retains a stock of a small selection of these products (eg. flood gates, vent guards and floodsaxs) and is willing to sell them to the public at cost price. The prices reflect the discounts available to the Council through bulk purchasing and are likely to be less than can be obtained by purchasing direct from suppliers. To find out more please contact the Flood Protection Unit on 01569 768517 or see: <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/environment/flooding/flood-protection-products/>

**Scams and Rogue Traders:** There has been a report locally of a scam where a flooded business received a letter from a furniture provider advising that their insurance policy required them to purchase replacement furnishings from this company. Please make sure that you check with your insurance company before committing to anything and when dealing with traders ensure that you get three quotes if at all possible. If you are at all suspicious get a name, contact number, type of vehicle and registration number and contact Aberdeenshire Council Trading Standards on 01467 628323.

**Voter Registration and Flooding:** The Grampian Assessor & Electoral Registration Office have stated that it is not their intention to change the electoral registration details of any electors who have had to move to temporary accommodation as a result of the flood. Residents may go online to update their details to their temporary accommodation if they so wish but this is not recommended. Poll cards, should be forwarded to the temporary address with all other redirected mail but if for any reason this does not happen please note the card is not required for you to be able to vote, it is for information purposes only. Any electors unable to go to the polling station can apply for a postal vote. Application forms can be downloaded at [www.grampian-vjb.gov.uk](http://www.grampian-vjb.gov.uk)

**Ballater Flood – Collection of Images:** Scientists from Aberdeen University are crowdsourcing information that could help prevent a repeat of damage caused by the recent flooding of the River Dee. Please send photos of the flooding in the area of Aboyne Bridge but also from Banchory to Braemar to [deeflood@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:deeflood@abdn.ac.uk) so that they can build an accurate picture of how the flood waters caused by Storm Frank built up and drained away. If successful, this would allow them to create the first ever crowdsourced hydrograph – essentially a plot of the water level through time. For more information please see: <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/geosciences/departments/geology/we-need-your-help-1133.php>

**SSE:** We have been informed that SSE have a dedicated number assigned for customers who have had to leave their homes due to the flooding and any queries about cancellation of direct debit can also be done using this number: 0800 9121512.

**Police:** Until further notice, the public office at Aboyne will be open Monday to Friday from 9am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 5pm.

**Waste:** Households who still have flood damaged items to remove please call Wasteline (03456 08 12 07) for a free bulky uplift service. This does not apply to building and construction waste including plasterboard, laminate / wooden flooring or insulation. Households will have to arrange collection of that material privately. The Council are no longer uplifting flood damaged waste from businesses. Wheeled bins will be replaced free of charge for those lost in the floods. Businesses who receive trade waste and recycling services from Aberdeenshire Council may have charges waived for an agreed period due to the impact of flooding and should contact the trade waste team.

**Sandbags – please remove from the street if no longer needed:** Sandbags can be re-used for future use by storing them in a dry environment unless they have been contaminated by sewage, deep floodwater or oil. If you cannot store them in your shed, Aberdeenshire Council can store them locally – pallets will be located around the village and sandbags can be placed on these. The pallets will be moved when full and stored either in Ballater or nearby and will be returned to the village in the event of another flood. If you have sandbags that you cannot store, please move them out to the pavement – against a wall so not to block the pavement and the Charitable Chiels and Roads Dept will pick them up and store them locally. If the sandbags are too heavy for folk to lift please contact the Chiels and someone will come and put them outside the property for collection (Tel: 07772668017).

**Insurance:** The Association of British Insurers (ABI) has some useful information for those affected by the recent flooding at:

<https://www.abi.org.uk/News/Newsreleases/2016/01/Clearing-up-after-the-floods-latest-advice-and-information-from-insurers> Their document 'Responding to Major Floods' may

also be useful and can be found at:

<https://www.abi.org.uk/~media/Files/Documents/Publications/Public/2015/Property/Responding%20to%20Major%20Floods.pdf>

They provided the following update for residents and businesses concerned about increased insurance premiums as a result of the floods: There is no blanket approach taken by the industry when issuing insurance quotes to consumers. Insurance companies use a range of data sources including 'flood maps' purchased from the private sector as well as their own claims history when issuing insurance quotes. An increasing number of insurers are taking a more detailed view of whether a property could flood – down to property-level and street-level assessment of risk from fluvial flooding or other types of flooding such as from surface water – which will continue as modelling and mapping improves. It is important to note that many of the commercially available flood maps assess flood risk on a small scale, some using 6m2 grids, so they are able to assess properties on an individual basis. Any changes to the cost of home insurance is a commercial decision for individual companies to make within the open market.

ABI advice to anyone who may experience difficulty in accessing flood cover at an affordable price is that customers should shop around as different insurers will assess risk in different ways. We would recommend speaking to a broker, many of which have specialist expertise in finding insurance for households at significant flood risk. The British Insurance Broker's Association runs a find a broker service, which can be contacted on 0870 950 1790.

It is also worth nothing, for those who are experiencing difficulties with home insurance, the Government and insurance industry have been working hard to develop Flood Re to help safeguard access to affordable flood insurance for people living in high flood risk areas. Flood Re is collaboration between the insurance industry and the Government and is currently planned to start taking policies on 4th April 2016. Because Flood Re will accept flood risk from insurers at subsidised fixed price rates, it should follow that market forces will cause prices to drop for customers who are increasingly finding it more difficult to obtain flood insurance. Further information on Flood Re is available at [www.floodre.co.uk](http://www.floodre.co.uk) It is estimated that between 31,500 – 45,000 homes in Scotland will benefit from the scheme.

#### **OTHER USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION**

Housing assistance: 03456 081203 (open 24hrs)

Council tax: 03456 081201

Benefits: 03456 081200

Social Care line: 03456 081206 (24 hours)

Roads: 03456 081205

Wasteline: 03456 081207

Environmental Health Line: 03456 081207 (24 hrs)

Police: 101 or 999

SEPA Floodline 0345 988 1188

BT - To let them know you have been flooded out and cannot return to your home phone 0800 800 150. For BT Business Customers: 0800 800 154

Drinking water - Scottish Water: 0800 0778 778

Medical Centre and Prescriptions: 013397 55686. Medical prescriptions can be ordered from the surgery. A courier service for prescriptions to fetch prescriptions from Aboyne has been established. Repeat prescriptions - Please allow 5 days for repeat prescriptions. For those who have no medication over the weekend phone NHS 111 for advice

Scottish Hydro: 0800 300 999

Scottish Power: 0800 092 9290

Scottish Water: 0800 0778 778

SKY - 0800 0158 693 - you can contact them and they will put your contract on hold until needed.