



## **Ballater Flood Bulletin No 11: Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

### **1. Updates**

**Aberdeenshire Council Ballater Recovery Plan:** The plan outlines the actions for recovery that have been identified as priorities and details how these will be delivered. Reference copies are available to read in the Library or copies can be obtained via email:

[marr@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:marr@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) An update on progress with delivery of the Recovery Plan is provided in Appendix 2 of this Bulletin.

**Police Scotland and Scottish Ambulance Service** have returned to normal service from the Ballater Police office on Deebank Road following completion of the reinstatement works. Police Scotland front counter services will be available Monday - Friday from 09.30-12.30 and 13.30-17.00.

**Aberdeenshire Waste Services:** This is the Final Flood Briefing Statement from Waste Services but should you require further help or advice then please contact the Wasteline on 03456 08 12 07. As the authority has now moved from response to recovery and has completed actions to support the initial clear up in towns across the area - skips in affected areas to collect flood damaged items are no longer available. Individual cases can still contact the council and we will work with them to assess the level of help required. Businesses who have been affected by the flooding are advised to contact their insurance provider to deal with the clearance of flood damaged items. Businesses who receive trade waste and recycling services from Aberdeenshire Council and have been affected by the impact of flooding can telephone the Wasteline on 03456 08 12 07 for further advice.

### **2. Advice and drop-ins**

**Aberdeenshire Council Ballater Flood Response Team:** Advice with flood related issues and signposting to further assistance can be obtained via the Marr Area Office, Tel: 01975 564803 or email: [marr@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:marr@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

**Message from Paul Hendy, Scottish Flood Forum:** Questions constantly on many peoples lips are: "How much longer are my home repairs going to take?; why have they changed my builder for the third time?; why are so many items left off the Schedule of works?; when are they going to reimburse me for my expenses?" The list goes on...

We are really glad for those who are either back or about to return home, but there are many people in our community still struggling with the flood repair process. The reality is that these delays add to the frustration and stress already caused by not being home. The Scottish Flood Forum continues to provide help, support and advice to anyone affected by the floods. Please do not feel you are alone or that no one cares. We are in Ballater for home visits and surveys on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings and the usual opening times on Thursday in the Library Thursday (from 2 - 4 pm and 6.30 – 8 pm). We are here for you. If you want to contact us privately or need a home visit please phone 07747702299 or e-mail [paul@scottishfloodforum.org](mailto:paul@scottishfloodforum.org) or call into the library and leave a note with the staff. I look forward to seeing you – Paul.

**Help with completing forms:** Anyone needing assistance with filling in grant application or any other forms can phone the Marr Area Office, School Road, Alford on 019755 64803 or 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).

**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.

**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
- John Bolton – to become volunteer for emergency planning within scope of Ballater Resilience Plan - 07710 544804 or [Johnboltonsq@me.com](mailto:Johnboltonsq@me.com)

**Library Opening Hours:** 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	CLOSED
Thursday	2 - 4 pm 6:30 – 8.00 pm
Friday	2 - 5 pm
Saturday	10 am - 12 pm

### 3. Sources of funding

**Ballater Charitable Chiels Flood Fund:** The Ballater Charitable Chiels continue to distribute funds to flooded households. The Chiels can be contacted on 07772668017 and will be available in Ballater Library on Fridays 2-3pm for consultation on flood relief. 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 in communities directly affected by the recent floods. Please 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 013397 56111 and Vittoria's Rectory number is 013397 55919.

### 4. Community groups involved in flood recovery

**Ballater Community Resilience Plan:** Mike Forbes is chairing the Ballater Community Resilience Group which is currently developing a Community Resilience Plan for Ballater. 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 Bolton on 07710 544804 or [Johnboltonsq@me.com](mailto:Johnboltonsq@me.com)

The latest revision of the Resilience Plan has been sent to the Community Council for their approval, after which it will be sent to Aberdeenshire Council, Police Scotland and Scottish Fire & Rescue Services inviting feedback by mid-July. The Plan will then be tested using training and table-top exercises to be undertaken in conjunction with the emergency services sometime during September and any changes necessary will be made; following this the Plan will “go live”. Volunteer recruitment has not been that successful to date and the group are keen to hear from anyone who is prepared to get involved. There will be a separate plan for Crathie and to oversee this, individuals living within Crathie have volunteered to deploy the plan when required using Crathie Kirk Hall as the Community Coordination Room.

The Trustees of the V& A Halls have agreed that the resilience team in Ballater will be able to use the Beaton Craigie Room as their Community Coordination Room during any emergency (eg. planning and deploying volunteers) and equipment required will be kept in the room. A Foundation Scotland grant of £2,007.00 will allow equipment to be purchased and training costs to be covered.

**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. Community input is welcome: please contact Tony Cox (Coordinator) 013397 55625. [coxscotland@btinternet.com](mailto:coxscotland@btinternet.com). The BFG did a public presentation on 13th May at Ballater Halls - copies of the presentation are available on request from Tony Cox. BFG met with Aberdeenshire Council and SEPA on 14th June; BFG await agreement from SEPA on the meeting minute and a response from Aberdeenshire Council concerning Duty of Care.

**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 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.

## 5. Information to be aware of

**SEPA Information Updates:** The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) prepared a summary outlining their flood forecasting and warning service and actions that are currently being undertaken (see Appendix 1 of this Bulletin). For any feedback on this or

further information please contact SEPA via their flooding email: [Flooding@sepa.org.uk](mailto:Flooding@sepa.org.uk)  
Further information about flood alerts and other useful advice can be accessed from the Floodline website via the 'your toolkit' page <http://www.floodlinescotland.org.uk/your-toolkit/>

**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/>

**Message from GP Surgery:** Quick reminder: For those people affected by the flood who have had to move to temporary accommodation, please remember to let your GP surgery know where you are - even if it is another temporary move.

**Ballater Flood – Housing Problems:** Aberdeenshire Council Housing Options Team are aware that some residents of Ballater and the surrounding area who are currently in temporary accommodation following the December Flood may soon have to vacate the rented or temporary accommodation. If you are in this situation and are experiencing or threatened with homelessness please contact the Housing Team during office hours (8.45am – 5pm Monday to Friday) on 01569 768562. The Housing Options Team will be able to provide you with housing advice and assistance.

**Advice from Aberdeenshire Council Housing Team about Private Sector Rentals:**

- Deposits: Any households affected by flooding that are finding funding the rental deposit difficult, please contact Private Housing Team on [landlordregistration@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:landlordregistration@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) or Tel: 01467 628491 or 01467 928492. Aberdeenshire Council has a Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme in place which may be able to assist in these circumstances.
- References: The use of references is at the discretion of landlords. Not all landlords take references but it is considered best practice to do so. References can come from a variety of sources and do not need to be from a previous landlord. Advice for both tenants and landlords can be obtained from contact above.
- Tenancy Duration (short assured tenancy minimum period of 6 months): This is set out in Scottish Government legislation. However, even though a lease is in place for a particular period of time this does not mean that the tenancy cannot be ended earlier by agreement of all parties. Landlords who are renting out their properties to people who have been affected by the floods may be agreeable to end the tenancy sooner.

**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 provided the following advice:

Retain your existing registration details (name, address) and poll cards will be issued to your permanent address. Providing you have your mail redirected to your temporary address, your poll card should reach you. You do not need your poll card to cast your vote.

If you normally vote in person at your polling station you can continue to do so. If getting to your normal polling station is inconvenient you can apply to vote by post – go to

[www.voteaberdeenshire.org](http://www.voteaberdeenshire.org) and download a form or telephone 01224 66 48 48 to request a form. If you normally vote by post, your postal ballot papers will be issued by the Returning Officer to your usual address unless you tell us otherwise. If you have your mail redirected to your temporary address, the postal ballot paper will be redirected to you too. If you do not have your mail re-directed, we can update our records with your temporary address for the ballot paper to be sent to direct, but you must remember to change that address back to your permanent home address when you move back to your permanent home.

If it becomes clear that you are going to be living at your temporary address longer than originally expected, for say 8-12+ months and decide to change your address for your bank, utilities and other official correspondence, you might find it useful to register as an elector at your new address – especially as banks check the register when dealing with credit applications. You can update your registration details at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)

If you have questions regarding registering to vote, please contact the Grampian Electoral Registration office on 01224 66 48 48 or [ero@grampian-ero.gov.uk](mailto:ero@grampian-ero.gov.uk)

**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:** The Police Station in Ballater has now reopened.

**Sandbags – please remove from the street if no longer needed:** Sandbags can be kept 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.

**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](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: Anyone who may experience difficulty in accessing flood cover at an affordable price 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.

For those who are experiencing difficulties with home insurance, the Government and insurance industry have developed Flood Re to help safeguard access to affordable flood insurance for people living in high flood risk areas. Further information on Flood Re is available at <http://www.floodre.co.uk/> and <https://www.abi.org.uk/Insurance-and-savings/Topics-and-issues/Flood-Re/Flood-Re-explained>

## **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.

## **Appendix 1: Summary prepared by Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) which outlines their flood forecasting and warning service**

### **SEPA Flood Forecasting and Warning Service**

SEPA flood warning service comprises the Scottish Flood Forecasting Service (SFFS) and Floodline, our direct warning service to the public.

SFFS is a partnership with the Met Office through which SEPA issues early warning to emergency services and other partners in Scotland through a daily Flood Guidance Statement. The guidance provides a risk assessment of flooding 5 days ahead and enables partners to prepare for the eventuality of flooding.

SEPA's Floodline service ([www.floodlinescotland.org.uk](http://www.floodlinescotland.org.uk)) provides web based flood warnings, as well as free direct notification of Flood Alerts and Warnings by SMS or by phone to registered customers; these can also be accessed by visiting SEPA's website or through calling Floodline 03459881188.

### **Flood Vigilance**

Working with the Met Office, every day, we assess the risk of flooding in the country for the next five days ahead and issue a Flood Guidance Statement to all emergency responders. Such Guidance enabled all responders including Local Authorities, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, etc to be mobilised and ready to act ahead of Storm Frank on 30 December 2015.

### **Flood Alerts**

We issue Regional Flood Alerts to the public through Floodline, available on our website or by phone by calling Floodline. People registered to the service receive a notification when we issue such Alerts.

Flood Alerts, which cover regions (there are 19 regions in total in Scotland), are issued when we forecast that "flooding is possible" anywhere in the region from coastal, river and surface water sources. It is an early alert to help people prepare for dealing with the possibility of flooding, generally issued up to 24 hours in advance. However it is not a targeted Flood Warning at community level.

For example, in advance of Storm Frank, we issued a Flood Alert for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City area on 29 December at 11:37.

### **Flood Warnings**

We also issue Flood Warnings to individual communities such as Ballater. We offer these more specific targeted Flood Warnings at about 269 locations in Scotland where we have a network of rain gauges and river / tide gauges sufficient to forecast flooding conditions with more accuracy from coastal and river sources.

The following Flood Warnings were issued for Ballater during Storm Frank:

Initial Flood Warning was issued Tuesday 29th December at 20:21.

*Heavy and persistent rainfall associated with Storm Frank will fall during Tuesday evening and overnight into Wednesday morning. This will result in rising river levels around the Ballater area during early Wednesday morning. Flood levels and flood extents could be higher than those experienced on 5th December during Storm Desmond.*

*The River Dee is expected to be high during this period. There will be a risk of flooding of low lying areas adjacent to the River Dee, this includes the Caravan Park, and properties on Dee Street. Further updates will be issued if the situation changes.*

The message was updated on Wednesday 30th December at 06:49

*Flood levels and flood extents will be higher than those experienced during Storm Desmond. The River Dee is expected to be very high during this period. Widespread flooding is*

*expected around Ballater including the area around the Golf Course, Caravan Park, Golf Road, Dee Street, A93 and Craigview Road.*

These messages were notified to the emergency responders who could react with full knowledge of the risk, and to those people registered on Floodline to receive messages for the Ballater Flood Warning Area.

Flood warning messages were available to anybody on our website or by calling Floodline. You don't need to be registered to access the messages. Registration to Floodline gives you the benefit of an automatic notification, but the service is available to the public at large.

### **Storm Frank - Review of Flood Warnings and Lessons Learnt**

After any major event we will review our systems and models with respect to flood warning. This work is already underway in Ballater. We have carried out some preliminary modelling on the river taking account of the breach in the embankment. This enables us to understand better the spread of flooding should another event occur whilst the breach remains in place. We are financially supporting a project by Aberdeenshire Council and the James Hutton Institute to collect LiDAR (topographic height) data for the river channel, banks and floodplain. We are also in the process of commissioning additional river cross sections in Ballater to further enhance our flood warning model.

We have a model which is capable of providing us with the information we need to issue flood warnings in future and in which we have a good degree of confidence. What we are learning about the flooding mechanism in Ballater during Storm Frank and coupled with the survey work described above will allow us to assess whether we can make further enhancements to the flood warning service in Ballater.

We are keen to work with the resilience group in Ballater to help communicate to residents how and when alerts and warnings are issued and how they should be interpreted. We are also keen to communicate the different ways people can access flood warning information and provide support to community networks and flood wardens (if and when applicable) in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council and the Scottish Flood Forum.

## **Appendix 2: Ballater Recovery Plan: Update on Progress (as of 28<sup>th</sup> June 2016)**

The Ballater Recovery Plan outlines the actions for recovery that have been identified as priorities and details how these will be delivered by Aberdeenshire Council, the community and other partners. Reference copies are available for viewing in the Library or copies can be obtained via email: [marr@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:marr@aberdeenshire.gov.uk). The recovery plan sets out the recovery actions under five themes and the update below provides a brief summary of progress achieved on delivering these actions:

### **Residents**

- Sluimohr tenants returned to homes.
- Programme of works for repairs to Council housing has been agreed and should be completed by December.
- Housing Team continue to give advice and assistance where possible.
- Scottish Flood Forum surgeries and advice ongoing.
- Questionnaire distributed to all affected residents and advice/support provided as necessary. A total of 135 replies were received, representing a 40% response rate. The most common request was for a copy of the Ballater Flood Relief Distribution Form, followed by insurance advice and updates on plans for flood defences or property level flood protection.
- Residents in Marr affected by flooding have accessed financial support via a number of different grants (Foundation Scotland, Ballater Flood Fund, Ballater Charitable Chiels, Rotary Club of Aboyne & Upper Deeside and the Scottish Government grant administered by Aberdeenshire Council).

### **Business**

- Drop in centre event held to provide advice from Business Gateway and others on VAT, insurance etc.
- Events programme being developed.
- Caravan Park reopened on 13th June and now working towards next phase.
- Golf course, bowling green, butcher shop, gift shop and chemist now open.
- Economic impact study carried out; draft complete. Business Recovery Group have moved on from flood recovery phase to regeneration phase and are carrying out survey of businesses in Ballater.

### **Infrastructure**

- Initial survey of river complete.
- Flood defences along golf club to be fully reinstated, work on bund is awaiting permission from SSE to allow work under overhead cables but this is being progressed.
- Historic bridges have been assessed.
- Dee Street reconstruction is still outstanding, and will begin once Scottish Water / SSE have completed their repairs.
- Other surface repairs carried out to allow access for clear-up and repairs (Deebank Rd, Anderson Rd, Albert Rd, Golf Rd, Salisbury Rd and Braichlie Rd) are medium term temporary, but permanent repairs will be programmed for a later date when they won't be disruptive.
- Open space adjacent to Fire Station; assessed and will be reinstated in conjunction with Dee Street repair (debris cleared, ground levelled and area reseeded). Landscape Services will be consulting the community on ideas to improve this open space for the future.
- Post- Storm Frank road repairs and gullies maintenance completed.
- Debris from base of Ballater Bridge has been removed and damage to bridge assessed.

## Environment

- Damage to footpaths and core path network by floods has been assessed. Bid being prepared to go to Scottish Govt. to provide funding to repair damage.
- River network looking much better.
- Most sandbags removed and 1 ton sandbags will be removed when bund along golf course is reinstated.

## Communication

- Flood Bulletin being distributed electronically and in paper format.
- Scottish Flood Forum surgery being held every Thursday and home visits on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
- Open day held on 2 April at V&A Halls; flood protection products exhibition and advice on Council discount scheme, volunteering opportunities, consultation on Ballater Station plans. Plans for a follow up event to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> September.
- Aberdeenshire Council Ballater Flood Response Team: Advice with flood related issues and signposting to further assistance obtained via the Marr Area Office, Tel: 01975 564803 or email: [marr@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:marr@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)