

Somerset Levels and Moors – 22 January 2023

Background:

The Somerset Levels & Moors are designed to store flood water when the rivers flowing through them over top. The recent heavy rain has caused spillways (specifically designed low points in the riverbanks) on the Rivers Tone and Parrett to flow and water is stored on the moors.

Across the Levels & Moors, the following flood [warnings](#) are in place:

- **Salt Moor and North Moor including Moorland**
- **Curry Moor and Hay Moor**
- **A361 East Lyng to Burrowbridge**

Current situation:

The situation on the Somerset Levels and Moors is constantly evolving. This outlines the most current information as of Sunday January 22 (12pm).

We remain in Major Incident, to ensure continued focus on the Somerset Levels and Moors with enhanced partnership working.

The weather remains dry, with negligible amounts of rain falling over the catchments over the past 24 hours. River levels continue to fall, with the amount of water stored on the levels and moors reducing.

Water levels are being managed using a “system wide” approach, balancing our activity across the entire levels and moors as we move the water out to sea. Levels in all watercourses, including the Sowy, are being closely monitored and pumping operations tailored to maximise opportunities to reduce water stored on the moors. As part of this we are adjusting the location of some pumps to optimize their output and keep them running effectively. Additionally at some locations pumps will switch off intermittently when they run dry, restarting as soon as there is enough water to resume operating.

Currently the total capacity being pumped across the Parrett and Tone Catchments is 59.5 cumecs (cubic metres per second).

Currymoor reservoir is no longer full and is now at 88% capacity, with levels continuing to drop. All spillways have stopped running, and levels on both Saltmoor and Northmoor are falling. We are continuing to use Oath lock to divert flows from the river Parrett down the Sowy through Monksleaze Clyde, which is also open.

Pumping activity is currently underway at Currymoor, Saltmoor, Northmoor, West Sedgemoor, Long Load, Westover, Huish Episcopi, and Middelney. In addition there are pumps running at Elson's Clyce, Haymoor, Fordgate and Bridgwater docks. Kitch Drove Tilting Weir is being over pumped to re-distribute water in the drainage network. At Dunball, the pumps are operational and running.

The A361 remains closed, with water slowly receding in this area. [Somerset County Council Highways](#) will be undertaking inspections of the road and will make the decision about when it is safe to reopen.

Keeping yourself and others safe:

As water levels recede, we continue to urge motorists not to attempt to drive through flood water, and especially on roads closed or affected by flood water. We have had reports of people attempting to do this, as well as moving warning and closure signs to gain access. Whilst road and path closures are frustrating, they are done to protect people, their vehicles and roadside property, as well as the roadway itself.

We have also had incidences of people entering, or attempting to enter, pumping station sites and temporary pump compounds. We have even had reports of people climbing over and around pumps. Not only does this pose a real risk of injury and even a risk to life, but it can also interrupt and halt pumping operations as staff on site deal with the issue. The risk, for the sake of a photo, social media post or shortcut is just not worth it – so please do keep yourself and others safe.

Outlook:

There is settled forecast for the next 5 days.

Tides are expected to peak in the morning of Monday 23 January. We are monitoring the impact that these high tides will have on pumping activity although the risk is very low at the moment and we are not expected to reach thresholds for any tidewatch activity.

Additional Information and advice:

We continue to have staff working 24/7 both in incident rooms and out on site and will continue to keep you updated.

Prepare for flooding in advance and stay up-to-date on weather information and warnings: <https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/plan-ahead-for-flooding>

Follow us on social media:

[\(1\) Environment Agency - Wessex | Bridgwater | Facebook](#)
[Environment AgencySW \(@EnvAgencySW\) / Twitter](#)

Or visit:

[Home - Somerset Rivers Authority](#)

We know that heavy rainfall may trigger feelings of anxiety, fear or worry, particularly for those who have been previously affected by flooding. Mindline is Somerset's emotional support and mental health helpline which is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: 01823 276 892 (local) 0800 138 1692 (freephone).

What to do during a flood

Information to help you on what to do during a flood is on the [Somerset Prepared website](#). Remember: Always stay safe. In an immediate flood emergency or where there is a risk to life, follow the advice of the emergency services.

If you would like to be added to the distribution list for Somerset Levels and Moors updates, please email aceo.wessex@environment-agency.gov.uk